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13 August 1984

NEAR EAST/SOUTH ASIA REPORT

CONTENTS

REGIONAL AFFAIRS

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Status of Maghreb Youth Assessed (LE MONDE, 10-13 Jul 84).....	1
---	---

ARAB AFRICA

EGYPT

Different Views on Recent Economic Changes Reported (Sana' al-Karasi; AL-AHRAR, 12 Jul 84).....	20
Labor Party Leaders Comment on Party Organization (Lutfi 'Abd-al-Latif; AL-AHRAR, 12 Jul 84).....	24

MAURITANIA

Cheikh Sid'ahmed Ould Babamine Discusses Education (Maj Cheikh Sid'Ahmed Ould Babamine; CHAAB, 10-11 Jul 84).....	28
Accomplishments, Goals Reviewed (Khouna Ould Haidalla; CHAAB, 12-13 Jul 84).....	32

MOROCCO

Foreign Trade Increase Examined (AL-TADAMUN, No 63, 23 Jun 84).....	38
Educational Policies Issue Reviewed (Abu Bakr al-Sadiq al-Sharif; AL-TADAMUN, No 63, 23 Jun 84).....	40

WESTERN SAHARA

Third Defensive Wall Bars Polisario From Atlantic (Paul Balta; LE MONDE, 21 Jun 84).....	43
---	----

ARAB EAST/ISRAEL

IRAQ

Trade Unions Meet To Discuss Industry Future (AL-TADAMUN, No 62, 16 Jun 84).....	47
---	----

LEBANON

Lebanese Currency Seen in Danger (AL-MUSTAQBAL, No 383, 22 Jun 84).....	49
--	----

Briefs

Insurance Payments in 1983	52
May Industrial Statistics	52

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

Israeli Attack on 'Ayn Al-Hulwah Camp Described (Zaki Shihab; AL-MAJALLAH, No 226, 9-15 Jun 84).....	53
---	----

Situation Among Fighters, Attempts To Rearm Discussed (Salih Qallab; AL-MAJALLAH, No 227, 16-22 Jun 84).....	58
---	----

SOUTH ASIA

AFGHANISTAN

Article Depicts Soviets' Persisting Dilemma (Robert Lacontre; LE FIGARO-MAGAZINE, 30 Jun 84).....	64
--	----

IRAN

Interview with Ovadia Soffer on Khomeyni, Atom Bomb, PLO (Ovadia Soffer Interview; LE FIGARO-MAGAZINE, 30 Jun 84).. <td>69</td>	69
--	----

Kuwaiti Paper Interviews Iranian Opposition Leader (Taleb Khalash Interview; AL-ANBA', 23 Jul 84).....	74
---	----

STATUS OF MAGHREB YOUTH ASSESSED

Paris LE MONDE in French 10-13 Jul 84

[10 July 84 pp 1, 7]

[Article by Paul Balta]

[Text] I. A Force On the Go

To use Victor Hugo's expression on the subject of Hernani, the Maghreb youth is "a force on the go." Naturally, throughout the world one of the features of youth is to be moving. Nevertheless, the Maghreb youth is more dynamic compared to the young people of Europe and most Third World countries. From Nouakchott to Tripoli, passing through Rabat, Algiers and Tunis, the leaders admit that it represents the "great unknown" of tomorrow and that it already has become "explosive." The Maghrebian caldron has boiled twice this year, in Tunisia and Morocco. This was not for the first time and nothing can guarantee that it will not repeat. Furthermore, no one is unaware of the fact that any political or social upheaval in any one of these countries may trigger similar tremors in others. Yet Europe is interested above all in the stability of the Western Mediterranean.

Let us start with Morocco, the oldest nation-state in the Maghreb. March 1965: a student demonstration triggered the first troubles in Casablanca, which made the new bourgeoisie shudder; 20 June 1981: high school students were the spark which triggered the second bloody disturbances in Casablanca. January 1984: this time high school agitation spread to several cities in the Kingdom and degenerated in the "high cost of living riots."

Similar phenomena occurred in Tunisia. June 1967: young people are in the front ranks in a support demonstration for Nasser "against American imperialism and Zionism;" 26 January 1978: they participate in a general strike of the General Union of Tunisian Workers, which turns into "bloody riots." January 1980: the Libyan-trained commandos which attacked Gafsa with a view to destabilizing the regime consisted mainly of young people. January 1984: high school students and young unemployed were the spearhead of the "bread revolt."

Nor was Algeria spared, although such "explosions" here were of a lesser magnitude, the young people being better controlled than elsewhere, notably by the FLN [National Liberation Front]. However, on 15 January 1971 Boumediene

dissolved the National Union of Algerian Students, which he blamed for being too active and, furthermore, manipulated by the PAGS (Socialist Vanguard Party), which took over from the banned Communist Party. April 1980: riots in Tizi-Ouzou; students launched the "spring in Kabylia," as a symbol of Berber cultural claims. April 1982: demonstration in Oran, where young unemployed joined high school students. November 1982: confrontation between the Muslim Brotherhood and "Berber-Trotskyites" at the Ben Aknoun University City, above Algiers.

These explosions in the three countries which are the core of the Maghreb are merely visible tips of the iceberg; once the euphoria of the first years of independence (1956 for Tunisia and Morocco and 1962 for Algeria) was over, the agitation of the students assumed a multiplicity of forms and became virtually permanent. As time went by the malaise spread throughout the entire youth. The fact that the young people of Europe as well are in the throes of a crisis as Maghrebian moralists periodically remind us, is an unquestionable fact. However, the structures of old countries, their greater wealth and, above all, their diversified cultural environment attenuate the effect of such agitation.

A different situation prevails in Libya and Mauritania. Unlike their neighbors, these two vast desert areas are scarcely populated and the latter is one of the poorest countries in the world. Yet, in both countries the young people are beginning to let their voices be heard and to object.

Naturally, the individual countries in the Maghreb have their own history and particular features. However, they have similarities as well. They have one common major feature: the people under 25 years of age account for 60 percent of the population or 36 of a total of 60 million (close to 2 million Mauritians, 25 million Moroccans, 23 million Algerians, 7 million Tunisians and under 3 million Libyans). Since for the exception of Tunisia the galloping demographic growth has not been stopped, the size of the population will double by the year 2000. Since it is becoming increasingly urbanized, with some of the capital cities accounting for at least one-quarter of the country's entire population, in societies which were essentially rural and traditional, an increasing number of young people feel uprooted and out of phase with their ancestral values.

No Mobilizing Project

They have not been offered any truly mobilizing project. Whenever the leadership believes to have found one, it does not appear to create any enthusiasm among these generations grown since the independence. Their fathers had dedicated their lives to the struggle for liberation; nationalism and faith in a voluntarist development continued to motivate some of them. Nevertheless, for the last 20 years, the disappointed youth has witnessed the emergence of a new bourgeoisie whose behavior is at variance with official speeches, for its passion for easy profit is stronger than the ideal of nationalism, the sense of sacrifice, the spirit of solidarity and respect for the concerns of society.

During the 1960's minority but very active opposition groups began to assert themselves, particularly in the universities: Marxists, Maoists and socialists denounced the social order and preached revolution. In Morocco they were quite

willing to replace the monarchy with a republic; in Tunisia, they would have liked a Nasser-like regime replace Bourguiba's, they considered excessively moderate; in Algeria they denounced the hegemony of the FLN. As the counter-balance, the leadership emphasized Islamic tradition and occasionally even countered them with small groups supporting nascent integrationism. The latter eventually prospered in the twin bed of the Arab spirit and the inability to promote total modernism in its specific style.

Indeed, the Arab spirit is the dominant tonality of the youth. It promotes unity within the Arab world and the restoration of Palestinian rights. Failures, splits and management errors are ascribed to the leadership, to imperialism and colonialism. However, following Egypt's defeat in 1967, the war in Lebanon, since 1975, Sadat's visit to Jerusalem and the vicissitudes of Palestinian resistance eventually led the Arab spirit into an impasse. This was a hard blow suffered by a youth which had become imbued with it!

The ideal of Maghreb unity could have taken over after Algeria normalized its relations with Tunisia and Rabat, which recognized the young Mauritanian state, toward the end of the 1960's and beginning of the 1970's. However, the thrust to a grand Arab Maghreb by the five nations was blocked starting with 1975 by the conflict in the Western Sahara, while the Democratic Saharan Arab Republic, whose population does not exceed 300,000 in all likelihood, claims the status of "6th component." The hope of an upsurge, which was raised in February 1983 as a result of the meeting between Hassan II and President Chadli, vanished quickly, while Libya, overturning its alliances, allied itself to Morocco. This was another blow for a youth watching on the sidelines, disenchanted and confused by games it viewed as sterile.

The causes and consequences of the Saharan conflict are actually deeper than they seem. According to Rabat the leaders of the Polisario Front are the children of Morocco, for it is there that their parents live. Some of them, in effect, attended Mohamed V University in Rabat. At that time they were demanding the liberation of Spanish Sahara, whose natives they were. However, having heard nothing from the Palace nor the opposition movements in which they worked, they founded the Front for the Liberation of Sahara, which gave birth to the Polisario Front. Although the war contributed to maintaining the cohesion of the Moroccan people, the economic crisis which it triggered struck hard at the youth and became destabilizing element for the regime. As to the hard core of the Polisario, consisting essentially of young people, it too risks to become a destabilizing factor on the regional scale unless offered an equitable foundation.

Absence of Outlets

Added to this political background, which plays a major role, are the social contexts and the psychological factors which will be analyzed in detail in subsequent articles by our special correspondents in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. But here again analogies exist. Other than in Libya, perhaps, youth unemployment is burgeoning everywhere in different proportions. The prospects for secondary school graduates have been reduced and for others blocked. Nevertheless, in this country which is short of plumbers, foremen, middle level

personnel, technicians and even...good farmers, there are virtually no vocational schools!

"Cultural life is virtually nonexistent." This complaint is repeated by the entire Maghreb population like a leitmotif. The press periodically cautions the youth against Western "nefarious influences" and describes the degradation of mores by citing the sad progress of drug addiction in Europe. However, there has never been a Maghrebian press campaign against growing hashish in Morocco! Generally speaking, the quality of the press is poor. Magazines for young people and comics in Arabic are either nonexistent or unattractive, with the exception of Tunisia whose output, however, rarely goes beyond its borders.

The radio programs have been improved to interest the young who would rather listen to European stations. Television, however, which enjoys a monopoly, except for Tunisia which retranslates an Italian channel, is boring. The production of television news programs, which are greatly appreciated and of films is pitiful compared to demand. As to movie theaters, their number has frequently shown a decline since decolonization, although the population has more than doubled. When will there be a common audiovisual Maghrebian market?

It is in sports that the greatest efforts have been made although playgrounds are still insufficient. Should we, therefore, be astonished by the popularity of soccer among the youth? On the other hand, could we blame the young urban residents, who are victims of the rural exodus and unemployment, or else hit by the rigid choice for admission to the baccalaureate, to dream of Beaubourg and Hollywood, to listen to disco music, to hum popular Western songs and to wear the jeans which their sisters or cousins manufacture for export?

Much more than their brothers in the Mashrek (the Orient), more distant from the West and conscious of living in their own world, the young people of the Maghreb (the West) are hit hard by the byproducts of a consumer society which is literally at their door. This "promised land," which is partially refused to them, make them jealous of the second generation emigres who succumbed to its charms. Yet, both feel torn. They are torn between two civilizations, two cultures and several languages.

In the Middle East, except for the Kurds, Arabic is the native tongue of all young people. In the Maghreb, conversely, in some areas, particularly in Morocco where school attendance is less widespread, it happens that the only known language is Berber. The young people in the Maghreb live in a homogenous Islamic environment but dream of modernism, whereas the emigres, who were born in France, think and speak French although wishing to remain loyal to their Arab-Berber and Islamic roots; although occasionally rejected by European society, they failed to reintegrate within Maghrebian society.* The regimes south of the Mediterranean bear their share of responsibility: they promote

*This malaise has been particularly well described by Bouzid in "La Marche" [The March], recently published by Editions Sindba in Paris.

both authenticity and modernism without being able to "nationalize" this important modernism or, better, to reinvent it.

All of these reasons may be an explanation for the fact that starting with the end of the 1970's some young people, encouraged by the Iranian revolution, have tried to find their way in Islamic activism, which they have partially substituted for a type of Arab feeling which has been discredited but has retained its latent power. Today the cleavage, therefore, runs between modernists and Islamists, it being understood that the former are not all of them simple imitators of the West and that the latter are not necessarily supporters of Khomeyni or of the past and that they as well could wear jeans and be in step with their time.

[11 Jul 84 p 5]

[Article by LE MONDE correspondent Jean de La Gueriviere]

[Text] II. Algeria: The Independence Generation

Hard hit by the offal of a consumerist society, victims of unemployment, disappointed by the failure of the Arab spirit, split between modernism and Islamic activism, the young people in the Maghreb are in the grips of a malaise analyzed by Paul Balta in the first article (LE MONDE, 10 July).

Algiers. Did the authorities fear at some point that the agitation in Tunisia and Morocco at the beginning of the year may contaminate Algeria? All it took was a few police vans filled with young people picked up in the district to go up Didouche-Mourad Street (formerly Michelet Street) for such rumors to spread toward the end of January.

A public order official assured us that it was merely a question of questions asked as a result of the disturbances caused by the showing of the movie "The Other Side of Midnight," in which a French actress reveals a part of her anatomy. In a country in which "licentious" scenes are most frequently cut out of televised motion pictures, such a projection was indeed of a nature to create troubles on the streets...caused by affluence.

Therefore, Algeria is no more protected from doubts of fever than are its Maghrebian neighbors, as confirmed by the troubles in Kabylia, in April 1980, which were essentially caused by students, and the April 1982 demonstrations in Oran, in the course of which young unemployed joined high school students.

More than 60 percent of the 23 million odd Algerians are under 22. This independence generation is supposed to recognize itself in the "party-state," in this FLN which proclaims itself "the only heir of 1,500 martyrs" and which expressed through a high youth council which met last March its concern with "the civic and religious upbringing of young people and their political molding in accordance with Islamic values and socialist morality."

Projections relative to Algeria's future in the year 2000 are considered valuable. On this subject ALGERIE ACTUALITES wrote: "The average annual

growth of the local Algerian population, which was 431,000 in 1967, reached 582,000 in 1979-1981. It could reach 1,071,000 by the year 2000 and 1,432,000 by the year 2010. Based on the current demographic increase, from 5,104,000 children in 1980 the primary school population (the 6 to 15-year age group) would reach 9,040,000 by the year 2000. In order to meet the demand, we should build one school every day. In the matter of housing, and bearing in mind the lag which has developed on the basis of an average number of seven people per housing unit and 3.8 people per room, it would be necessary to build 2,378,000 housing units between 1985 and 2000 if we are to reach a fixed density rate of 7 individuals per housing unit."

A Strict Baccalaureate

Following the organization of primary schooling, which includes primary and secondary schooling with vocational training, at the end of which a certificate is awarded, school attendance has become mandatory in principle until the age of 16. The purpose of this new system is to limit the considerable dropout rate which was caused so far by the old school sifting system. The demonstrations in Oran were essentially triggered by the rumor that the baccalaureate would be subject to quotas. Although such a measure is not stipulated in any law it nevertheless exists in practice, due to the lack of space in the universities and of outlets in some subjects (law or medicine) which are in particular demand.

The results of the 1983 baccalaureate are the following: 18,000 of more than 100,000 applicants were accepted. Some 300,000 to 400,000 young people become excluded from the school system every year. For the time being, vocational training schools can accept less than 200,000 students. No more than 32,000 young people were able to undertake their apprenticeship in 1982! The government, which is aware of the problem, is studying new measures to help those who cannot be admitted to baccalaureate examinations.

The streets of Algiers have the perennial appearance of school playgrounds because of class "rotations" due to the crowding of classrooms. Severe crimes are rare in Algeria; conversely, watch out for cars with radio sets! The street gang is the natural refuge of the young people rejected by the school, waiting for their two-year military service. "There are too many poorly educated adolescents," is the leitmotif in explaining the pitiful condition of some urban facilities, such as destroyed mailboxes, spilled garbage cans in the heat of endless soccer games, etc.

In What Language to Think?

In opening a conference on Arab culture in January 1975, Boumediene said: "In Algeria the French language is a foreign language and will remain such, just as it was during the colonial period." In what language does the young Algerian think? In Arabic, unquestionably, in the case of primary school students, for such schools have become entirely Arabic, with several hours of French taught per week. Things become more complicated in the case of high school and university students, particularly in the scientific subjects, which are only now being converted to Arabic. The various nationalities of teaching

cooperative workers--French, Soviet, Polish, Pakistani--worsens the difficulty. "Try to image the reaction of a student who is asked the following: 'Why do your friends come as a group while you come isolated?'," wrote ALGERIE-ACTUALITES in an article with the telling headline "To Be a Student at Bab-Azzouar is a feat!"

The language aside, what model of society is copied or rejected by the youth? The lack of advertising, with its archetypes of happiness and the extreme rarity of tourists limit frustrations. All that remains are numerous trips for emigration purposes and the easy access to French radio stations ("You have no idea of the impact which advertising Merlin could have on an ignorant listener: two comfortable rooms for such little money," a sociologist told us).

For those who read other than comics, which usually deal with the war of independence and are published by a national company which enjoys a virtual monopoly, the choice offered by newstands and the few libraries is extremely narrow: a repetitive and tightly controlled domestic press, an increasingly limited number of foreign newspapers, a militant domestic literature and imported books dealing most frequently with science, technology and the economy. The pitiful windows of the four or five Algerian bookstores, worthy of the name, exhibit no more than a few pocketbooks chosen on the basis of disconcerting criteria, and the novels by a few Algerians which are not in disgrace, published by Le Seuil. The choices offered by cassette vendors is broader. Soccer and variety music are the true entertainment of the young. For millions of boys stretched on summer beaches the ne plus ultra is to have a radio cassette and ecstatically to dance among males.

After a few coin-operated machines were introduced in Algeria, last summer the organization of rock concerts became a national event. The halls were crowded but the rare girls present were cooperative workers. All that is left from these "mad days" for a marginal fringe is the type of work which integrationists find repulsive: "oiled hair, black and white shoes, crossed vests, thin black necktie, comb, a chain bracelet and a sharp narcissistic smile," was the typical model of one of the finalists at the hard rock competition in Zeralda, as described by an Algerian journalist.

In this restricted society endless "daring" steps are being taken by the minister of culture, not deprived of a real period of innovation: tours by French singers such as Dalida or Reggiani ("atrocious acoustics, freezing drafts," according to a rather negative report published in ALGERIE ACTUALITES) and the type of motion pictures which draw a public other than frustrated and overexcited boys who take their revenge on the ravaged theater seats any time the film is edited, as for instance when the heroine is about to fall into the arms of the cowboy.

"Chains" (lines in the local jargon) less sinister than usual are formed in front of movie theaters screening a film which was discussed last spring: "A Wife for My Son," by the Algerian Ali Ghanem. The topic strikes at the heart of the problem, as noted by the snarls revealing a hidden anguish--the arranged marriage of Fatiha, 18, with Hocine, a 32 year old immigrant, whose

father would like to bring him back to the country; "real life" scenes, including a conversation among naked women in a public bath.

Would a "rich" immigrant be a good catch for an Algerian woman? Many are the boys who suffer from the lack of eagerness on the part of girls in large families to set up a household. What the young dream of, even the privileged ones with a job, relates to "a two room apartment for us alone" in a suburb....

No official unemployment statistics are kept in Algeria. We know, however, that people under 30 account for the bulk of the unemployed. "In 1980 there were 2,335,000 jobless girls and boys," we are somewhat astonished to read in a party youth publication.

Groups of young people are scattered along the infrequent sidewalks in Algiers, strung out with open-air coffee shops, not far from the department of literature. The few couples holding hands are noted by their comrades drinking orange juice or rock fans standing in front of the store window of a cassette merchant, who offers disco and oriental music published by the World Music Club. Noticeable among hundreds of jeans are a small number of long dresses worn by the "Muslim Carmelites," young women whose hair is entirely covered by a hijab, who have chosen a dress allegedly consistent with Koranic tradition.

'MB' and 'Berber-Trotskyites'

Here there are as many behavioral contrasts as there are styles of clothing. The department of humanities has the reputation of a center of integrationists, of "MB," as the Muslim Brotherhood is referred to in Algeria, having succeeded to turn a prayer hall on campus into a real savage mosque, open to all and highly regarded by the fundamentalists. It is also the core which, in protesting detentions, organized in November 1982 a big prayer which spilled over into the streets.

The integrationists have kept a low profile, not only merely by shaving their beards, after the authorities put a stop to their activities toward the end of 1982 (LE MONDE, 15 December 1982). Nevertheless, they frequently find recruits among the urban students and are always present, as confirmed by their proselytizing--fiery preaching recorded on cassettes and invitations to attend "discussions among friends" in the vicinity of the savage mosques. To many youngsters integration with communities set up around such mosques offers a remedy for their loneliness and boredom. This has been well understood by the authorities which have been relatively successful in creating an urban "spirit."

The fact that the "MB" appear in the news once in a while does not mean that they have gained the general adherence of the young people who are not looking exclusively in the direction of Mecca. "What do the integrationists specifically want? Algeria has preserved its identity not in words only. What matters in today's world is the economy. Are there many countries whose economic independence is as real as it is here? Not everything may be perfect in our country, but at least our hotels, banks, transportation companies and production and marketing enterprises are exclusively controlled by us and no one can influence our decisions." The young cadre of the SONATRACH, who spoke to us thusly,

"had no time" for FLN membership. There are many others like them, unquestionably with some reservations as to the functioning of political institutions, but nevertheless "Algerians above all," convinced that their country "is on the right way in the matter of development."

In November 1982, a confrontation at the Ben-Aknoun University City, in the heights above Algiers, a confrontation between the "MB" and those who the authorities sometimes describe as the "Berber-Trotskyites," left one dead among the latter. Some 30 detentions followed this real battle. "We are the only resolute force opposing religious fanaticism," one such "Berber-Trotskyite" told us. The government is reaping what it sowed. In the past a democratically elected committee in Ben-Aknoun had been in charge of restoration, transportation and cultural activities. After the April 1980 events, which were ramified in Algiers, the authorities allowed the establishment of a new committee which acted on behalf of the mosque. We saw the results...."

Our interlocutor, a Kabyl, was among the students demanding the right to a Berber cultural identity. However, he claimed that the semi-clandestine periodical TAFSUT (Spring, in reference to April 1980), of which he was one of the founders, does not limit itself to the defense of the Berber movement and is above all a supporter of freedom. According to the authorities, however, the defense of human rights is no more than a pretext used by a minority which ideologically opposes the "reasonable way" followed by President Chadli.

Under the Party's Guardianship

Following the dissolution of the Algerian National Student Union by Boumediene in 1971, the various youth socioprofessional categories, operating under the party's guardianship, are represented by the National Union of Algerian Youth (UNJA). Essentially, the UNJA rallies university and high school students, young workers, scouts, etc. The exact number of members of this mass organization is unknown. It rallies supporters or sympathizers for collective projects which could serve as examples, such as afforestation and cleaning up public places.

The UNJA publishes the weekly L'UNITE (three issues in Arabic and one in French every month), which recently denounced the behavior of "many school principals who reject the legitimacy of the UNJA 9 years after it was founded and set up parallel sports and cultural organizations with a view to opposing the mass organizations."

It is generally noted that it is difficult for the UNJA to establish a foothold among high school students and virtually none among university students. The problem of the FLN is to find a new language with which to address itself to a generation which, with the exception of militant minorities, neither supports nor rejects it categorically.

[12 Jul 84 p 5]

[Article by LE MONDE special correspondent Nicolas Beau]

[Text] III. Morocco: Between the Ball and the Koran

The great unknown of tomorrow, the Maghreb youth is an explosive force. In the first article Paul Balta analyzed the reasons for its malaise. In the second article Jean de la Gueriviere described the life of Algerian youth (LE MONDE, 10 and 11 July).

Rabat. What is the true face of the Moroccan youth? Was it those 15,000 sportsmen who gave a magnificent show in the 1983 Mediterranean Games, under the sympathetic eye of Hassan II? Is it the millions of young people who crowd the mosques every Friday? Is it the high school students in Sale, not far from Rabat, who symbolically threw in the air a loaf of bread during the January troubles, before fighting for pieces of the loaf, or those who carried triumphantly on their shoulder an old employee in their high school, deprived of his pension? Or else is it those 50 children from the slums of Casablanca, who cling on to their studies in a youth house made of corrugated iron, lit by a single pitiful bulb, in order to avoid the "street rot?" Actually, no one today can determine the nature of this youth which is bursting more than ever before. No project seems able to harness this rising tide--young people 19 or under, who account for 52.5 percent of the entire Moroccan population (more than 60 percent of the population is under 25).

The left, which ruled the schools and universities during the 1970's, has lost its hegemony. The presence over the past 2 years of very active watchmen in the universities hardly encourages political activities which are now pursued by a minority. The paralysis of the National Union of Moroccan Students (UNEM), which fell victim as much to repression as to internal dissensions, has done the rest. No true mobilization took place in the universities following the January arrests. An answer to the event was attempted only at the ministry's specialized institutes, which paid for it with a "blank year."

"The majority of my students have become apathetic or totally negative," explained a progressive professor of the humanities department in Rabat, a monster of 10,000 students, and once a bastion of the opposition. According to him, the political militants have turned into "extremists and dogmatists."

The leaflet which called last March for a strike against the sentencing of 70 demonstrators in Rabat was based on a type of maximalism, which does not set priorities among the innumerable claims, ranging from opposition to the firing of a professor to guaranteeing jobs for all graduates.

Nor is cultural life any more sparkling; this is primarily due to lack of funds: how could many initiatives be launched in high schools with narrow classrooms and crowded universities? What kind of programs could be presented on television if the annual budget of the Moroccan television journal is half that of the "Great Checkerboard?" Where are their available premises, if a city such as Casablanca (with a population of more than 2 million) has, according to

the authorities, only three establishments for delinquents and 20 youth houses, the operational budgets of which are concealed, no doubt to avoid embarrassment.

Therefore, lack of funds needed to create structures which will substitute for a community life broken up by urbanization,¹ but also excessive police control: for obscure reasons the Amateur Theater Festival has not been held since 1981; last spring the Poetry Festival in Chaouen was banned and, recently, several suspected movie clubs were abolished....Finally, four high-quality cultural magazines were suspended after the January events.² Under such circumstances, "the soccerizing of the youth" is on the agenda, and the relay of sports games (the country has 1.5 million television sets), squeezed between an American serial and an Egyptian chronicle has become the opium of a youth without wide horizons.

Girls, who sell themselves for small gifts in the chic cafes of Rabat, have mockingly nicknamed their popular district of Yacoub-el-Mansour "Dallas," a name which has acquired the significance of a symbol. The recommendations issued by the Ministry of Information to advertisers against 'spots' with strong "Western connotations" are helpless, for the Moroccan youth is also a disco youth which dreams of the United States, skyscrapers and Beaubourg and its cultural effervescence.

The young Moroccans, only present in streets and coffeeshops, for lack of sports stadiums and libraries, are mostly silent: although high school girls, like so many others, remind us of the new condition of women, consisting more of dignity than liberation, the mere mention of the January events make them silent. The fact that the students will discuss "everything" hours on end in a coffeeshop on Hassan I Boulevard in Casablanca, means that they discuss "music, girls and studies," studies which, as we know, all too frequently result in unemployment--20 percent in the 15 to 24 age group, according to a 1980 survey. Nor does unemployment spare university graduates, such as that lawyer who, after 2 years of civil service with the administration, is forced to sell newspapers in the center of Rabat.

Moroccan youth no longer truly believes in the "technological shortcut" or the "leap forward," which were extensively described in a 1970 book by socialist economist Mohammed Lahbabi,³ which would have permitted access to an industrial society in one or two generations. "The portfolio of orders is already crowded," wrote Abderrahim Bouabid, head of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces, today a minister of state, in the preface to the book.

Nevertheless, although the Moroccan left is today within the government, this is the time when one-half of the new jobs which were offered to the ascending generation by a state which, in order to build itself recruited massively cadres and teachers for 20 years, is being abolished. Confused, the Moroccan youth is the orphan of mass schooling (100,000 university students) which was to open all doors to it. Henceforth, as a Moroccan university graduate said, it resembles "a virgin soil." "The young have returned to the starting point, as though our generation had not prepared anything," claims this progressive intellectual, some 40 years old, who cites as proof the "agitation" in the streets last January. "The victims," he says, "were used to create even more victims."

The 'Efficient' Society

Islam remains the only available recourse in filling this gap. The Muslim push, which began in the Maghreb even before the Iranian revolution broke out, is evident today.⁴ There is no single group, even among the very young demonstrators of last January, the majority of which are not practicing believers. There is no single family, whose younger brother or cousin has not become converted to integralism over the past 5 years. There is no progressive professor who has not clashed in his high school, to his great astonishment, against the claims of an active minority brandishing the Koran. At the humanities department in Rabat the call to prayer alone could disturb a seemingly studious afternoon, whereas strike slogans were whispered in the cafeteria.

Of the 3,000 freshmen enrolled this year, 650 enrolled in the Islamic studies department, which was founded only 4 years ago. There are clashes between progressives and Islamists, now of equal strength, in Fes and Marrakech, and 300 of the 3,000 students in the Casablanca university campus are believed to be Islamists militants.

According to these youngsters, the strict observance of the Koran would not only stop moral degradation but promote economic development. "If Islam were to be truly practiced, Morocco would not be an underdeveloped country," firmly claims the daughter of the chairman of the Ulemas (doctors of law) in Rabat, a graduate in Muslim law, who wants a society which would be as "efficient" as "healthy." Although she denounces European "abuse of alcohol" or "pornographic films" and the "lack of adequate police in Paris," she acknowledges the technological and economic successes of the West--"the common heritage of human civilization."

Recovery?

The same productive-type statements were made by a young professor of logic we met one evening at a meeting of a mystical fraternity in Rabat, who claimed that his 1,000-page thesis could be written only by scrupulously observing "Muslim morality." "At least," he said, "I am not wasting my time in coffee-shops." To both Islam appears like the privileged way of asserting a collective responsibility and a motive force for economic progress. "It is the Islamic students who seem to be the most curious, who read the most, not exclusively about Islam at that," said a Casablanca professor. Their collective and state project thus naturally assumes the most regressive features of a pure and harsh morality (in matters of adultery or homosexuality, for example).

The level of organization of this Islamic youth and its loyalty to the system would be difficult to assess. Islamic movements, some 20 of them according to the specialists, do not rally all young people involved in activities frequently hostile to the monarchy. Many of them, organized or not, remain loyal to the King, commander of the faithful and the head of a state whose official religion is Islam.

The split between the regime and the numerous movements whose persecuted members are in hiding, seems to have increased after the January events. For the

past few months one notices few beards or chadors in Morocco's universities. Henceforth, the police are seeing to it that Morocco is protected from "the cancer of heresy" and a permit is required for building any new mosque: "the Islamists are the most militant," admits a former supporter of the extreme left. "They may succeed in helping us to get rid of this regime." However, Hassan II, a skillful opponent, also knows how to increase the number of gestures which may satisfy this segment of the youth. As our interlocutor pointed out, "the Algerian system is trapped by defining what is good and what is evil. Here the king avoided this scrupulously." Starting with August 1983, by staging a spectacular trial of 70 drug users from the most favored strata, who were given a harsh sentence, Hassan II issued a warning which could satisfy the Islamists. On 23 February last, the king announced his intention of "strengthening the Suna, be it at home, at the mosques or in the schools." A "new frontier" was offered to young Moroccans who will be sent to non-Arab speaking Muslim countries to preach Islam. Finally, the construction of a Moroccan Institute of Technology and Science allows the king loudly to assert the "necessary synchronizing of science and technology with Islamic philosophy."

These are all steps and convergences which, according to a USFP leader, express "the emergence of an ideological right through religion." He also adds that "in this country history has always been on the side of the right and ideology on the side of the left. A recovered Islam could offer the regime the opportunity of acquiring the ideological structure it is lacking." Hassan II seems to be better prepared than many other Arab leaders to stop the current by combining repression with seduction.

'I Need Islam'

Eight of them live in this humid house in a popular district in Rabat, where two windowless rooms open on a small internal paved yard. Mansour, a law student, shares with his young brother a four-square meter premise next to the family's kitchen. It is there, surrounded by the smell of cooking oil, using a nightstand as his desk, that he worked hard for the baccalaureate, which he passed after failing twice, at the age of 23.

The brilliant sun notwithstanding, he is wearing his raincoat and wool hat. He is uptight. He speaks with a soft voice, smiling, in bad French, of the 650 dirhams (650 francs), the quarterly government scholarship, almost all of which he gives to his family; he also speaks of the very scarce books loaned by friends. "One needs," he says, "good friends;" he speaks of the crowded classrooms, of instructors hardly older than their students, which he considers "poor," and of subjects which he did not choose: "I wanted to be a teacher," he says, "but normal schools have no place for the poor." According to him, neither poor people nor misery would exist if "the true Islam" was practiced.

He becomes truly excited only as he speaks endlessly, this time in Arabic, of the Muslim religion: "I need Islam the way people need water, sunshine and air. The Koran has an answer to everything." The five books piled on a shelf above his bed are all about Islam which, in his view, enjoys very little respect in this "society of appearances" which Morocco is.

"The Muslim must not practice evil yet they do." "They" are the practicing officials who would issue him the necessary papers only if he pays, the supporters of the Left who "abandon their principles" for a little bit of dishonestly earned wealth, or else anyone "who forces women to work both outside and at home" and "to put on makeup in order to get a job" rather than "raise a future generation with tenderness." Conversely, he does not consider the veil mandatory, "unless the woman is very beautiful."

In his view, the situation should change rapidly. According to him, "movements" and "people" are working in that sense. "The number of true Muslims is increasing with every passing year, thank God," he adds without providing more specific information which may be used "against his ideas." Despite the repression, he has not shaved off his beard which he wears "as did the prophet."

What about Iran? At this point the student laughs openly. Although he does not know what is truly occurring there, he finds strange the unanimous opposition to the country by the media he mistrusts. "Khomeyni was right," he finally admits, and Iran is the only country which this student, who has taken only one trip in his life, to Casablanca, which is 90 kilometers away, would willingly visit, "to find out the truth." He would also visit any one of the hated communist countries, which is the only place where he could hope to obtain a scholarship today.

FOOTNOTES

1. According to the 1982 census, since 1971 the urban population showed a 4.4 percent increase (as against 1.4 percent in the countryside).
2. The four periodicals are ATTAKAFA EL JADIDA, AZZAMAN AL MAGHRIBI, AL JOUSSOUR and AL BADIL.
3. "The 1980's of Our Youth," by Mohammed Lahbabi, professor of economics and member of the USFP, Editions maghrebines, Casablanca.
4. See the article by Bruno Etienne "The Islamic Wave in the Maghreb," in the periodical POUVOIRS, special issue on "The Islamic Regimes" (new 1983 edition).

[13 Jul 84 p 7]

[Article by LE MONDE correspondent Jean de la Gueriviere]

[Text] IV Tunisia: Integralist in 'Jeans'

The great unknown of tomorrow, the Maghreb youth is an explosive force. In the first article, Paul Balta analyzed the reasons for its malaise; Jean de la Gueriviere and Nicolas Beau described the life of the youth in Algeria and Morocco (LE MONDE, 10, 11 and 12 July).

Tunis. "Our birthrate remains very high (2.60 percent) but is less than that in Morocco and Algeria," we were told by the director of a big Tunis daily. "We are not in solemn competition for having the largest population in the Maghreb, a rivalry which has political reasons but which also involves some risk for those involved."

Family planning has existed here for the past 20 years. Authorized abortions are practiced in the cities. With a population estimated at 7 million, small Tunisia is far behind Morocco and Algeria, each of which with a population of substantially more than 20 million. The age pyramid, however, remains the same. One-half of the population is under the age of 20. Young people aged 15 to 25 number some 1.7 million, whereas the active population, including those engaged in agriculture, does not exceed 1.5 million.

National education and other training departments account for more than 30 percent of the state budget and more than 8 percent of the gross national product. Schooling is not mandatory but more than 90 percent of children attend school on a more or less permanent basis. There are 1.3 million primary and 800,000 secondary school students. This year there were more than 26,000 candidates for the baccalaureate (16,000 in the sciences and 10,000 in the humanities) as against 20,000 in 1983.

"The problem," we were told by a university graduate, "is that it is becoming increasingly harder to make university graduates pick olives. Too many young people are interested in office jobs only. Every year 90,000 young people enter the labor market. The 1984 budget stipulates the opening of no more than 42,000 jobs, 10,000 of which in the administration. An illiterate unemployed person is a 'poor guy.' An educated jobless person becomes a wolf."

Four years ago, another university graduate wrote in the "North African Year-book:" "a growing disparity exists between the aspirations of the young and the possibilities of becoming part of the productive circuit....The "fast growth" strategy, which was promoted by Mr Nouria as a result of the guided economic policy encouraged by Mr Ben Salah, was paralleled by a series of changes which affected the entire social body."

Starting with 1982, which was a turning point in exposing the fragility of the Tunisian economy, things have worsened: low sales of phosphates and textiles, poor harvests (other than citrus fruits and olives, which are hard to sell despite their good quality), and drop in tourism from Europe. The hotel industry, banks and public offices, which filled their positions during the 1970's, are offering lesser opportunities. Emigration to Libya and Western Europe has come to a stop.

Expatriation and low salaries--particularly women's--in the textile industry which is now suffering from European protectionism, "was a lesser evil which enabled us to deal with the most pressing problems," the people around the prime minister say. "We must create new jobs but outside Tunis, through industrial decentralization, achieved by encouraging small family enterprises. Between the time the National Foundation for the Promotion of Crafts and Small

Enterprises, in 1981, and September 1983, 3,400 files were submitted to the banks and 2,000 of them were accepted."

Outside such reassuring ministerial figures, reality is quite apparent in the very heart of the capital. Flower merchants alternate with newsstands selling all European newspapers and French pocketbooks ranging from Montaigne to collections of erotic books under the fig trees of Bourguiba Avenue. Newspaper boys go from table to table in the restaurants peddling same-day Paris newspapers. This is the image of a sweet, cosmopolitan and tolerant Tunisia.

On the sidewalks, however, a flow of unemployed young men looking for an impossible adventure goes back and forth. "I am in business" is the invariable answer to the question which one of the infrequent tourists may ask if willing to engage in conversation. At best, such business consists of selling chewing gum or cigarettes. "Several years ago, to be able to sit alone in the terrace of a coffeeshop was a privilege which the Tunisian woman could share with few of her Arab sisters," a young woman told us. "Today, to show up alone in a public place has turned into a trial. One feels on the street a type of vulgar behavior, a latent aggressiveness. These are new phenomena."

'Rooted' Women

As the only organization concerned with culture, the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI) claims to be able to answer the following question: how can a woman be modern and remain a woman?, a "rooted" woman, to use the perennially repeated expression of the integralists.

In Tunisia not all of them have a regressive attitude toward the state of women. Something has changed ever since the Muslim Brotherhood had opposed the emancipation which President Bourguiba desired. "The Tunisian Islamists, or at least some of them, are unique in the sense that they accept modern society with a religious touch," we were told by a professor who had learned from students how some of them had found out how "to remain true to themselves under the veil, driving a car or leaning over the microscope in a research laboratory."

Actually, the young Tunisian women are split between two trends. Some have adopted the Western model; others ask themselves if that model is not a trap and if salvation may rest with traditional Islam after the death of the Supreme Combatant. A short while ago, the wife of a jailed integralist developed in REALITES, an independent weekly, the thesis according to which bigamy may be preferable, appearances notwithstanding, to a monogamy which leads to adultery and divorce in the case of frigidity or sterility.

Nothing could be more misleading than the cliché of a turbaned Muslim brother good for nothing more than mechanically mouthing the Koran. To begin with, as far as appearances are concerned, the young Islamists frequently wear beards. However, they are also perfectly willing to wear jeans. They are fascinated with the West but they also reject the object of their quest if it is impossible to reach. The entire ambiguity of some modes of behavior is revealed through the clothing of these young believers wearing cowboy trousers, who prove

to be more zealous than soccer fans at games played between mosque-sponsored teams.

"The Islamist movement is, above and beyond anything else, a movement of the educated youth. It is essentially schools and universities which are its centers for dissemination and support base," wrote Mr Hermassi, professor at the University of Tunis, in an article on "Tunisian Society in the Islamic Mirror," published in the periodical MAGHREB-MACHREK.

The sociologist was impressed by two facts:

"Massive participation of women, a phenomenon which is doubly paradoxical considering the lack of women's participation in trade union activities and the anti-feminist reputation of Islamic ideology;

"Heavy concentration along the Mediterranean coast and in Tunis, less in the center and the south and very weak in the northwest....The center and the south have been traditionally linked in the eyes of the law and order forces to the Youssefist rebels."*

In the course of his study Hermassi questioned a sample of representative Islamists. He noted that the great majority of them came from the poor strata: 21 percent were the offspring of low-level cadres; 46 percent were children of urban or farm workers; 29 percent came from families of "disaster" victims (father either deceased or long-term unemployed).

The paradox is that the democratization of schooling granted these young people access to the university, while they have the "sharp awareness, henceforth, of the impossibility of becoming a part of the elite" and even of the labor force because of the economic crisis.

Hermassi also emphasized the strong concentration of Islamists among science students. Why is this, we asked him, for one would think that the study of the humanities would encourage a greater amount of thinking about society and questioning it? Because one becomes an Islamist in high school, Hermassi noted. "The Islamic environment is very serious and is not aimed at imbeciles. The young Islamist, taken in hand, studies hard. He earns the best grades and quite naturally finds himself wherever selection is the strictest."

The University Microcosm

Currently there are some 40,000 university students in Tunisia. The state of mind of this minority is not necessarily that of young people at large, government circles sensibly emphasize, aware of the fact that a spirit of rebellion is blowing on the campuses. Yet is the situation more favorable elsewhere? Such as, for example, in these suburban little islands within which the Islamists organize themselves to the point of controlling the entry and exit

*Reference to Salah Ben Youssef, former secretary general of the Neo-Destour and Bourguiba's opponent before the independence.

of any foreign visitor interested in these real cities within the city, with their information and mobilization networks.

The General Union of Tunisian Students has been slumbering for more than 10 years. Those known as the "regimists" rarely show themselves during campaigns for the election of delegates representing the students in faculty councils.

Islamists and Leftists are up front, equally represented in law and humanities. A few hundred votes in a total of 4,000 to 5,000 students in a department would suffice to elect someone due to the abstention of the majority of students who keep away from the confrontations but are passive followers, thus avoiding "difficulties" should a strike be proclaimed.

These silent majorities unquestionably object to some campus excesses but not to the point of joining the organization of socialist Destourian students, who no longer keep offices in the various departments because of the hostility they have encountered. Nor would one find in the high schools offices of the National Organization of Student Youth, which is under the auspices of the governmental party, for since 1980 the high school students have demanded a "representative and autonomous union."

The Tunisian Youth Organization Union (UTOJ), located in the Party House, which is a block of concrete facing the ministries, rallies Destourian university and high school students and members of several other movements, such as women's youth, scouts, and youth shelters. Mohamed Ben Saad, its secretary general, received us in his office, with an issue of a French youth weekly on his desk. "I too am interested in your problems," mischievously said this affable and unpretentious man who hardly looks like a "fascist," as described by his enemies. Ben Saad, who was quite willing to show the various youth publications he manages, did not emphasize the real importance of his role.

According to a survey published in REALITES, 27 out of each 100 young Tunisians are very interested in politics; 45 percent not very much and 28 percent not at all. "They no longer find themselves in the parties' speeches. The lack of integration themes, as was nationalism in the past, has encouraged them to stand on the side. The Islamists are the only ones who bring with them something new." This bitter remark was made by a Leftist activist. However, could a democrat truly deplore the lack of aptitude on the part of the "factually single party" to take over half the population?

The Two Desert Flanks

[13 Jul 84 p 7]

[Article by Paul Balta]

[Text] Although Libya and Mauritania--the two desert flanks of the Maghreb--share a common feature of being vast stretches of land uninhabited by nomads (unlike their neighbors), conversely they are quite different in nature.

Drought, persistent nomad life and archaic social structures (only 2 percent of the children of the haratin--emancipated slaves--attend school), the repercussions of a ruinous war waged against the Polisario Front and the government's lack of funds have resulted in the fact that Mauritania has no university and no more than 27 percent of its children go to school. The unrest in the schools in 1979-1980 had been essentially the work of the black communities which had demanded a recognition of their native tongues. After a period of calm, the unrest was resumed this year, including among the Maurs. The high school students demanded better working conditions and the democratization of political life. Currently more than one-quarter of the entire population lives in Nouakchott, the capital: juvenile delinquency has appeared and unemployment is rampant.

Col Qadhdhafi's Libya, in turn, has been spoiling its youth which was rather ignored under King Idriss. The results of the 1976-1980 5-year plan show that the number of students in primary and preparatory grades increased from 650,000 to 750,000; the number of secondary school students increased from 17,000 to 66,000; the number of technical school students increased from 3,700 to 8,000 and the number of university students virtually doubled, from 13,000 to over 25,000. The regime has sought mainly to change the mentality of the people through a variety of reforms such as abolishing the dowry and encouraging the emancipation of young girls.

Until recently, the young people were the best support of the "guide of the revolution." However, as the execution of two students a few weeks ago reveals, the situation has begun to spoil as the result of the ideological hardening of the Jamahiriya and the militarization of the senior grades in high school and of university students in the name of defending the country but, actually, in order to wage a successful war in Chad and serve Col Qadhdhafi's ambitions.

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DIFFERENT VIEWS ON RECENT ECONOMIC CHANGES REPORTED

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 12 Jul 84 p 5

[Article by Sana' al-Karasi: "Successive Decrees Regarding Importing Goods without Converting Currency Hurt National Economy; Guidance Committees Are Obstacle to Importers"]

[Text] Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id, minister of economy and foreign trade, has announced that the remittances of Egyptians working abroad have increased by about 125 million dollars during the months of April and May since the new law about remitting the savings of those Egyptians went into effect, creating an additional, legal channel in banks operating in Egypt. This is an average of almost 65 million dollars a month.

Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id said that this increase has been realized through two channels for converting currency: banks and money changers. The minister indicated that the present system can finance half the applications [for permits] to import goods without converting currency.

Successive Decrees

Mustafa Kamil Murad, president of the Liberal Party and an expert on the economics of developing countries had this to say about the recent economic decrees.

"We are not in favor of issuing successive administrative decrees to regulate import operations that do not involve the conversion of currency. This is because [such decrees create] numerous governmental difficulties when they are carried out. That means implementation is slowed down. This, in turn, impedes the import process and upsets importers who are then unable to import goods at the appropriate time in accordance with the needs of the market and at the best prices available in foreign markets. The prices of goods are always changing in world markets. An experienced importer can determine when and how much he can import. But to do that, the import measures themselves have to be quite flexible. Goods may be imported without converting currency when the government's [foreign] currency allotment is not utilized. In other words, the importer has to come up with the required currency from the free market."

Mustafa Kamil Murad added, "The guidance committees that have been created are regarded as administrative obstacles to importers. This is because importers naturally import the goods that are needed in the market. A review of the kinds

of goods that are imported without currency conversion showed that more than 80 percent of these goods are basic goods, machines and production requirements. Imported luxury items constitute no more than 20 percent of these imports, and that is a normal ratio that we do not have to worry about. This is because if we assume that the government would forbid the importation of luxury items, or if it were to reduce the amount of luxury items that are imported, citizens can get around this problem in one way or another. They will either smuggle these goods or they will be brought into the country with incoming passengers. The ultimate result is that these goods are actually imported into the country, but the government does lose the customs fees that are payable for them."

Private Sector Banks

Regarding the entry of private sector banks in the business of importing goods without converting currency, Mustafa Kamil Murad said, "Private sector banks must have an effective role to play in financing imports that do not involve the conversion of currency. The Central Bank should not interfere in this process because that would slow it down."

The president of the Liberal Party had this to say about how the price of the dollar could be stabilized and the Egyptian pound strengthened: "The principal remedy in our opinion is to establish a commercial currency market in agreement with the IMF. We should agree with the IMF on a certain plan through which the Egyptian pound would be floated and its price fixed according to the conditions of supply and demand. Accordingly, remittances from Egyptians abroad would grow, and the currency that is necessary for importing goods would become available through the banks. The system of importing goods without converting currency would decline gradually until foreign trade is liberated from all restrictions."

Restoring Discipline

About the same decrees Mustafa Zaki, the general manager of the Chamber of Commerce [had this to say]: "Economic authorities have recently issued several decrees aimed at restoring discipline to the banking industry and ridding it of the corruption that set into some of its units. Thus, the most efficient use of the available tools of monetary policy can be guaranteed to succeed so that the economic monetary course [of the country] can be reformed. These decrees dealt with some of the principal lines of the monetary policy and the economic policy for the purpose of correcting their course, particularly with regard to [the following]:

"First, these decrees will reinforce the authorities of the Central Bank, letting the bank spread its influence and its control over the banking industry to bring it under control and to guide it in carrying out the planned, monetary and credit policies without any deviation or shortcomings.

"Second, the decrees will free the foreign currency market in Egypt from the effect of uneconomic, contrived and uncontrived factors that led to an abnormal rise in the free prices for foreign currency. This is to be done by a committee that would fix the official and governmental rates of exchange for foreign currencies according to the Foreign Currency Center at the authorized banks.

"Third, the decrees will allow commercial banks to buy and sell these currencies at the rates that are set by the forementioned committee. To start, these rates have been set as follows: 112 piasters for the purchase price, and 118 piasters as the sales price to private sector importers.

"Fourth, a committee is to be formed in the Central Bank--the Credit Committee--for the purpose of dividing and classifying applications for letters of credit that are approved and that come from banks. The division and classification will be done in accordance with the priorities that have been set in the context of the relative importance of goods for which credit is being sought."

Scientific Studies

The head of the Chamber of Commerce added, "These decrees did not come out of a vacuum. They are the product of a process of studying and evaluating previous similar decrees about which serious, scientific and practical discussions have been held at all economic and commercial levels.

"The Chamber of Commerce had proposed a solution to this problem. It had proposed that authorized banks come up with the foreign currency that is required to cover the remaining letters of credit at a price that would be set by these banks as a third currency outlet. This is provided that that price be taken into account when the cost of importing is calculated. This suggestion was made in September 1981.

"This suggestion is consistent with the state's inclination to develop the system of importing goods without converting currency and to change that system gradually into one in which goods would be imported directly. This would be a system in which letters of credit would be issued for the full amount in Egyptian pounds, and the authorized banks would assume responsibility for coming up with all the foreign currency that is required for import operations and at the official rate of exchange, as determined by the Foreign Currency Center in the authorized banks."

Many Critical Remarks

Mustafa Zaki said, "First of all, in order for these measures to succeed, they should have been preceded by arrangements to ensure that sufficient amounts of foreign currency are available to cover the pre-payments on the letters of credit, which are about 300 million dollars a year.

"Second, [these measures should have been preceded by arrangements] to influence the supply of foreign currency in the market when necessary so as to reduce the rate of exchange in the unofficial market.

"Third, the authorized banks could not respond to the new decrees and measures as quickly as these were being issued. Monetary decrees and measures underwent numerous amendments and changes.

"Fourth, the recent economic decrees and measures were not enough to make the change that is required. These measures were limited to raising the rates of exchange of foreign currencies."

The general manager of the Chamber of Commerce explained the shortcomings of these measures by saying, "First, the rates of exchange that are declared [and set] by the Foreign Currency Center in authorized banks are not flexible.

"Second, there aren't enough foreign currency reserves to meet the anticipated demand for letters of credit which are expected to materialize during the early period of implementing this policy.

"Third, more red tape is resorted to. This is manifested in the formation of more committees and the imposition of some restrictions on banks when currency is purchased."

A System That Failed

The general manager of the Chamber of Commerce concluded by saying, "The system did not bring about the success that it was required to bring. This is evident from the statements that were made by Dr Mustafa al-Sa'id at his recent press conference. He said that he had earmarked resources for private sector importers by bringing together the foreign currency that is held in authorized private banks only. Statements made by the minister showed that these allocations did not exceed 1 million dollars during the months of April and May. Since the volume of imports that do not involve converting currency is not less than 100 million dollars a month, these resources cover no more than 2 percent of the volume of allocations for private sector imports, and that is a very small percentage.

"Even the foreign currency reserves of the government's four banks, which according to this system are not more than 24 million dollars in 2 months, are also insufficient. Even if all these funds were collected from the private sector, they would not be more than 13 percent of the private sector's volume of imports.

"According to this system the resources of private banks and the resources of [the government's] four banks would hardly cover 15 percent of the volume of imports that do not involve the conversion of currency.

"Although a few letters of credit have been issued to some private sector importers early when this system went into effect--it was announced that these letters of credit amounted to 43.6 million dollars--that was done either by deferring some of the public sector's foreign currency needs, which are supposed to be arranged by government banks, or by rescheduling the public sector's foreign currency needs. Evidence for this lies in the fact that when economic authorities sensed that the private sector's demand for letters of credit had grown, they issued instructions to these banks to raise the pre-payment for letters of credit 100 percent so as to curb importers' demand for letters of credit from banks. It is known that the interest rate that will be paid on raising the pre-payment for letters of credit exceeds the difference between the rate of exchange as declared by the foreign currency reserve in private banks or authorized banks, which is 118 [piasters], and that rate in the free market, which is 123 piasters."

It remains to be said that this system has added a new outlet for selling currency to importers even though the currency revenues of private banks are small.

LABOR PARTY LEADERS COMMENT ON PARTY ORGANIZATION

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 12 Jul 84 p 5

[Article by Lutfi 'Abd-al-Latif: "The Voice of the Opposition: Members of the Liberal Party's Reorganization Committee Discuss Party's Platform as One Expressing Facts about Egyptian Citizens"]

[Text] Committee members say the party's platform proposes scientific and practical solutions to all the problems of Egyptian citizens.

The establishment of a political institute to train young liberals is required.

The first step toward a sound democracy is the eradication of illiteracy.

The Liberal Party is in a state of constant flux these days. It is engaged in intense activity to evaluate the previous stage and to study its consequences, particularly those that came in the aftermath of the People's Assembly elections. What is more important is that the Liberal Party is making preparations for the coming stage. It is dedicating all its energies and resources to rebuilding the party, and it is selecting leaders and cadres who can hold their own in situations and assume responsibilities.

It was the opinion of the political leaders of the Liberal Party that a committee to reorganize the party and build up its political cadres be formed. The committee will look into the mistakes that were made by party members during the elections. It will also make a complete evaluation of the party's activities in recent years, particularly those that have to do with the size of the membership. The committee will prepare a realistic study so that true facts about the Egyptian countryside can be achieved, and it will organize committees for the party in each village in Egypt.

Accordingly, a committee of 52 members has been organized. Members of this committee are the elite of the party; they include the party's secretaries in the governorates and those whose names headed each list of the party's candidates. A 19-member subcommittee divided into three groups came out of this general committee: one group would follow up on the party's activities in Upper Egypt, from al-Fayyum to Aswan and the New Valley; the second would follow up on the party's

activities in Lower Egypt; and the third would follow up on the party's activities in Cairo and al-Jizah.

Each one of these subcommittees will visit each governorate separately and will conduct a field study on the party's activities in that governorate. Each subcommittee will evaluate the competence of the party's leaders in that governorate as well as the size of the membership. It will try to arrange office space for the party in all the cities and centers of the governorate, particularly in the more populous cities. The subcommittee will also evaluate the most important activities that are undertaken by the party in each governorate. The subcommittee will meet every Tuesday.

The Party's Reorganization Committee will oversee the subcommittee [sic], and it will review the reports that are submitted to it by the subcommittee. The Reorganization Committee will conduct a detailed, scientific study of these reports so they can be put to use. A period of 3 months has been set for completion of all the studies by the Reorganization Committee and by the subcommittee. One of the goals for which these committees were formed, the reorganization of the Liberal Party, is to be achieved within those 3 months. Then the general convention for the Liberal Party will be held next November to elect the leaders of the party.

Who are the members of the Liberal Party Reorganization Committee? What is their political history? What are their views about the reorganization of the party?

To answer these questions AL-AHRAR met with a number of those leaders.

AL-AHRAR met first with Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid, the party's secretary in Bani Suwayf. Mr 'Abd-al-Hamid is a member of the Reorganization Committee and one of the leaders of the party who is very popular both in the governorate and outside it.

Mr Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid, who was born on 21 May 1946 in Bani Suwayf and is employed as a teacher, has been known for defending the rights of teachers in Bani Suwayf. He has also been calling for the independence of the Teachers' Union from the National Party. He has proclaimed the slogan that "All of us are for Egypt and are dedicated to serve Egypt in any party and from any position."

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid said, "I became involved in political activity ever since the Liberal Party became a platform representing the right-wing in the Socialist Union. I took part in drawing up the party's platform which is an easy, unequivocal and simple platform that requires no philosophy and no theory. The platform of the Liberal Party expresses the facts about Egyptian citizens. It embodies what they suffer from, and it proposes a scientific view for solving their problems."

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid added, "I affirm this with conviction and faith: the principles of the party are constructive principles offering persuasive and feasible solutions to the problems of Egyptian citizens. The party's platform presents a true picture of Egypt's problems and how they can be solved."

Speaking about the experience of the elections with the conditional proportional list and how useful that experience was, Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid said, "The

Liberal Party has proved that its political outlook is a sophisticated one. When the party lays out its views on a particular matter, it does so by means of an objective study. After the government of the National Party issued the new elections law for the People's Assembly, the Liberal Party declared that it would not participate in the elections. The Liberal Party even asked all opposition parties not to become involved in the elections under this law because it would falsify voters' wishes and was custom-tailored for the National Party. The Liberal Party also called for the need to obtain sufficient guarantees including repealing the state of emergency and martial law."

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid added, "When the Liberal Party found that the government was determined to hold the elections according to the "conditional list law," it proposed that opposition parties run in the elections on one list so they can consolidate [their power] in the face of the National Party which has funds and resources and can put the agencies of the state to work for it. However, the opposition parties have been condemning the falsification of the elections and have not been thinking about the unified list that the Liberal Party proposed to them."

I asked Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid about the most important projects that the party was carrying out to serve citizens in Bani Suwayf.

He answered, "The problem of wiping out illiteracy may be one of the most important problems in Egypt. Many developing countries have been able to wipe out illiteracy among many of their citizens. So far in Egypt, however, the rate of illiteracy is very high. But because the Liberal Party believes in the importance of eradicating illiteracy, it set up among the people of Bani Suwayf literacy classes that are free of charge. The party is also conducting refresher courses for students in the various stages of education. In addition, through its own efforts and within the limits of its resources the party has started two classes to teach young women sewing and typing."

Muhammad 'Abd-al-Hamid added, "I think that the most important function of the committee is to organize new youth cadres for the party. The committee is to try to organize Liberal Party committees in the governorates where the party has no secretariats or committees."

"What demands will you make at the meetings of the party reorganization committee?"

He replied, "The first demand will be an attempt to remove or dismiss all the leaders who made no concrete gains in the elections. Removal [from a position] does not mean expulsion from the party. It rather means removing those people from positions of leadership and selecting new popular figures for those positions."

"You have a new plan for reorganizing the party. What are the basic points upon which this plan is based?"

He said, "The most important item in the plan is that of setting up political institutes for the Liberal Party. Each one of these institutes would have a number of party leaders who can teach party members political subjects. The institute would conduct training courses at the party's headquarters. At first, these courses would be very limited, but then training would be expanded, and each

course would have 25 party members, for example, representing the different governorates. In addition to party leaders, a number of political science professors would be asked to lecture, and a course would last 6 months. In the future party members who have received this training may offer these courses in their governorates. We can thus ensure the creation of a political generation that understands its mission."

From Bani Suwayf we went to Damietta where we met with 'Izzat Abu 'Abduh, the secretary of the Liberal Party in the governorate of Damietta. Mr Abu 'Abduh is a member of the party's reorganization committee and one of the party's most prominent leaders. 'Izzat Abu 'Abduh is employed in the profession in which 60 percent of Damietta's residents are employed: the furniture industry. He was born on 10 December 1933, and he lived before the Revolution. He also had a role to play in the political movement after the Revolution. He took part in the Socialist Union where he rose among the ranks until he became third secretary of a district in Damietta.

'Izzat Abu 'Abduh joined the Liberal Party in 1976 when it was a platform for the right-wing. Abu 'Abduh said, "I joined the Liberal Party because it is a party that declares a liberal tendency. [It stands for] political freedom for all individuals; for freedom for all individuals to form parties; and for freedom for individuals to publish newspapers, elect organization leaders, governors and mayors and freely and directly elect the president and his vice presidents. [It stands for] economic freedom, an open economy and freedom for the public sector to operate and invest, and it does not interfere with the private sector's efforts to produce."

Abu 'Abduh said, "The present stage in which we are living is considered one of the most important political stages that the party is facing. The party is facing material challenges in the fact that all its offices in the governorates have not been completed. It is facing non-material challenges that manifest themselves in the pressure that is being applied by the National Party on members of the Liberal Party."

Mr Abu 'Abduh was asked about the party's activities in Damietta. He said, "The party is taking the problems of merchants under its wing because Damietta is known for trade, and the private sector plays a major role in the governorate. We are trying to get in touch with officials to solve these problems.

"The party is also engaged in intense activity in the villages and cities to find out what the problems of the masses are."

About the reorganization of the party Abu 'Abduh thinks that it is necessary to pay attention to the young leaders in the party. He thinks it is necessary to embrace those young leaders and try to win over popular leaders and gain their confidence.

8592

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MAURITANIA

CHEIKH SID'AHMED OULD BABAMINE DISCUSSES EDUCATION

Nouakchott GHAAB in French 10-11 Jul 84 pp 10-11

[Interview with Maj Cheikh Sid'Ahmed Ould Babamine, permanent member of the CMSN [Military Committee for National Salvation] by CHAAB: "The Very Positive Results Demonstrate the Suitability of the SEM"; date and place not given]

[Text] The role of the SEM [Structures for the Education of the Masses], the outlook for its program and the evaluation of its work--what questions could be more important for our readers on this 10 July 1984?

This is especially so because the permanent member of the CMSN honestly answers the specific questions that, like CHAAB, you have no doubt asked yourself. Among other things, this deals with the SEM educational program, the role which the structures reserve for intellectuals and the extent of the preparations for the long-term goals.

[Question] Over 1 year ago, the SEM education program went into effect. What have you learned from this initial experiment?

[Answer] Allow me first, on this 10 July, to wish a happy birthday to all SEM supporters and components and to urge them to redouble their efforts to achieve the SEM goals for the higher interest of our people. For this reason the PAE [Educational Action Program] was conceived because its short-term and long-term efforts aim, among other things, to encourage the Mauritanian to dispense with certain behavior prejudicial to his participation in the work of national construction. In other words, it would be difficult to measure the impact of this change even if the time period were much longer. Nevertheless, certain optimistic signs have already been noted. The information and training phase for the supervisory personnel has been carried on widely, at least it was begun on a broad scale at the level of departmental and regional bodies.

Most PAE themes inspired one-time actions to raise consciousness (providing information about the major achievements of the national leadership, etc) and the SEM components supported and made reference to this program during their conferences (departmental and regional) and finally the teaching method dealing with specific situations has been spread.

Of course, there are still deficiencies; the major one is the effective implementation of the program given priority in April 1984.

Thus, 1 year after the creation of the PAE, I think the preliminaries have been taken care of so that real education can begin according to the spirit of instruction based on the teaching method.

[Question] The intellectuals, with their special characteristics, have a major role to play in the mission that the SEM hopes to fulfill. Do you contemplate a specific activity for them?

[Answer] I agree with you that the intellectuals have a decisive role to play in the educational mission of the structures. Likewise, I agree that their participation in the SEM must be expressed through the channels which set them apart from other citizens. However, I do not think that a specific program is contemplated to get them to fulfill their rightful mission.

Every country has a debt to its sons and especially to its intellectuals.

Likewise, the intellectuals have a debt to their country.

The national leadership reserved a choice place for intellectuals when the SEM was set up. Indeed, seminars were held in early 1982, to hear their point of view and gain their support and, to gain their participation, the staff was given supervisory duties and they held information campaigns.

To top all this, citizens gave responsibilities to many intellectuals in all SEM components.

You will agree with me that the SEM's interest in intellectuals has been translated into deeds. We can, however, criticize the staff because the reactions have not perhaps been of the dimension expected. I dare hope that everyone will understand the scope of his role and will fulfill it fully and resolutely.

[Question] The national SEM conference is scheduled for late this year. What will it mean in the life of the SEM?

[Answer] I prefer not to draw any conclusions for two reasons:

Regional conferences have not yet met;

The proceedings of the conferences already held are now being analyzed so that the economic commission can provide a follow-up.

Therefore, God willing, I will gladly answer your question at our next meeting. However, the atmosphere which prevailed, the quality and level of the debates, the many participants, the nature of the problems raised and the substance of the resolutions approved--all this indicates that the components have understood their mission and they have given the necessary response.

[Question] The momentum of wide-spread, spontaneous national solidarity in response to the appeals of the head of state now inspires our actions, inaugurating a new era of confidence and hope. How can this dynamic movement be situated in the context of the 10 July movement?

[Answer] I repeat that the National Commission is an important, even decisive organization in the life of the SEM.

In fact, it completes the creation; it is the definitive implementation of the SEM components started in 1982 and it will evaluate the work done and project work to do by the structures. In other words, the National Commission must correct errors, determine priorities, clarify future action and bring together the highest-ranking leaders of the SEM and the government. It will thus be an opportunity for a fruitful exchange of experiences and a forum for give and take. Consequently, it represents a capital opportunity for the SEM.

[Question] The SEM were defined as a framework of unity, discussion and work. What are their characteristics and to which specific institutions do they correspond?

[Answer] You remember the dismembered state of the country before 10 July 1978, the economy strangled, the effects of a fratricidal, unjust war endangering the national sovereignty, panic unbalancing the citizen and trapping him in a resignation harmful to his future, intrigue extending its tentacles, a germ destructive to the entire system; in short a situation of resignation and lassitude. These are the main reasons for this intervention of the armed forces whose goal is not only to reverse this situation but also to initiate a dynamism of change by making the Mauritanian confident of himself and his future, values with which he built a nation and accepted the challenges ever facing him. Thus, to translate this determination into deeds, it was first necessary to take basic steps (cultural reform, abolition of slavery, application of the "cheriaa", reform of privately owned and state-owned land, etc) before beginning to raise consciousness through education and good work: this explains the repeated, broad appeals which the CMSN president has made to the Mauritanian people and all vital forces, appeals which have now opened this new, necessary era of confidence and hope.

I said above that the prejudicial attitudes can be changed through education and good work. To this end, the CMSN decided to set up structures for education of the masses as the framework for unity, discussion and work, among other things.

Thus, each of the three concepts relates to specific, imperative dimensions.

In fact, the Mauritanian people is a people of many parts. This reality enriches; it is a complementary quality but it can be exploited dangerously by the enemies of our unity. All citizens must defend and safeguard the ramparts necessary to maintain national unity. Therefore, they must discuss it without passion, convinced of the need to strengthen national unity. The SEM functions smoothly when everyone supports it and feels equally responsible for what it conceives and implements.

Yet discussion is not just limited to national unity. Thus, the PAE had to draw up a list of all contentious issues among all segments of the population and of the sensitivities of SEM members. Through discussion, we want to lead the Mauritanian by conviction and consultation to make the CMSN options his own and to decide resolutely and consciously to protect them. When everyone participates in these discussions, the marginalization of the Mauritanian citizens will end, marginalization which has already dealt real blows to national construction. The SEM is recruiting personnel for this task.

Finally, I stressed earlier that prior to 10 July 1978, the Mauritanian felt defeated and lacked confidence about his present and future. Thus, through the structures, work, the collective and solidarity effort which characterized our ancestors, must be given its true value again. The extremely positive results of the actions of the masses thus far demonstrate the relevance and suitability of the SEM as the structure for this work. Thus, an attitude of taking responsibility for oneself and one's problems is being rooted in the social behavior of our people.

Despite some pitfalls, the SEM has taken giant steps in these essential directions, proving its ability to be the desired framework. Nevertheless, the work done must be extended and solidified. The role of the media, here as elsewhere, can be decisive; for that reason, I am taking this opportunity to urge you to do more to raise people's consciousness, to inform in order to spread the SEM goals better.

9479

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MAURITANIA

ACCOMPLISHMENTS, GOALS REVIEWED

Nouakchott CHAAB in French 12-13 Jul 84 pp 2-4

[Speech by chief of state Khouna Ould Haidalla on 10 July, National Armed Forces Day]

[Text] Officers, non-commissioned officers and soldiers, my dear compatriots,

National Armed Forces Day on 10 July will permanently mark for our people the dawn of a new era of national peace, liberty, unity and cooperation.

It is because of this that this memorable day is an appropriate opportunity to sum up what has been accomplished on the path to national salvation.

Rather than reviewing everything that has been accomplished I will mention only the most significant and indispensable items in the continuation of the economic and social recovery program developed after 10 July 1978.

You will recall that this program was implemented during a particularly difficult period of unrelenting drought and worldwide recession.

These two persistent phenomena persuaded the national administration to select the path of honor, austerity and sacrifice.

With this in mind the Military Committee for National Salvation laid out an original philosophy designed to transform the thinking of our compatriots. The key idea in this philosophy consists of mobilizing our fellow citizens in order to fully realize the necessity of counting first and foremost on their own strengths.

This was the major thrust of my appeal of 24 April 1982 when I asked them to leave behind ~~the~~ idea of always being assisted—an idea fostered in them by the former regime. At that time I explained to all layers of our society that external aid can only be used as an addition to our own national effort.

In this regard the Structures for Educating the Masses must play a significant role in changing our way of thinking. As an indispensable tool providing direction, training and mobilization they will henceforth help to cultivate love of country and a desire to work in our men and women.

To their credit they have accomplished many important tasks including building hundreds of schools, dispensaries, dams and retaining dikes. They have also played a significant part in relieving the suffering of our desolate masses by carrying out much other voluntary work.

In this way they have magnificently proved the increased role they have continued to play in the harmonious development of our country.

This development cannot occur without national participation. To meet this goal of general development the political education and training of the Mauritanian man must be included in any recovery effort.

Our people will be able to meet all the challenges and resolutely set the country on the path of progress through a total and complete awareness of their duties as citizens and actual builders of the future of their country.

Therefore, through education of the masses we must constantly try to mobilize our fellow citizens toward genuinely national options such as patriotism, unity, solidarity, mutual aid, independence and dignity.

As part of this the National Armed Forces have been involved in creating conditions that favor the economic and social development of the country since we came to power on 10 July 1978.

After having restored peace the national administration decided to transcribe and teach our national languages, to apply Islamic ideals in all areas of national life, to abolish slavery and to begin an equitable land reform, a necessary condition for releasing our human energies and effectively using our farming potential.

As can be seen, all of these measures stem from our major concern to strengthen the unity and cohesion of our people and to control our destiny. They are also a result of the spirit of justice and equality that our holy faith requires of us. Our Islamic faith must henceforth guide our intellectual and community life and encourage us to work courageously and to refuse fatalism, waste and sloth.

By arming ourselves with this faith we will always be able to counter the insurrectionary plots against our people and its national administration.

My dear compatriots,

The intense efforts made by the Military Committee for National Salvation and the government have not yet attained the desired results.

This fact does not result from an error in evaluating the catastrophic heritage left us by the former regime nor of the goals and methods implemented to rectify the situation.

It results from a combination of negative effects of the international economic crisis and the unprecedented persistent drought experienced by our country this year. It is also the result of some inadequacies of a portion of our administrative

management system. It is also the result of a lack of awareness by some people in applying the policy of rigor and austerity decided upon by the Military Committee for National Salvation and the government to properly manage the national heritage both on the national and private levels.

At a time when the central administration is operating in an austere manner, it is not uncommon to see public establishments, state firms and national private firms with an ostentatious lifestyle that is far from reflecting the underdeveloped state of our country.

These disparities between the lifestyle of the central administration and others are all the more distressing and inadmissible while our country is going through a difficult period.

The nation forms a whole which must be managed in a healthy, harmonious and coherent fashion.

My dear compatriots,

The lack of rain in 1983 has caused unprecedented upheavals. We have witnessed a massive flight of rural people to large urban centers. This flight continues to cause complex problems for the authorities, whose duties are becoming even more difficult and delicate.

This situation has forced some of our livestock breeders to take their herds into the furthest reaches of the country to look for pastures. It has forced others to cross the borders to neighboring countries whose authorities I would like to thank for their warm welcome.

To face this problem the national administration has taken measures which have, among others, saved thousands of human lives and kept our livestock from being totally destroyed.

A National Committee for Assistance to People Affected by the Drought (CNAPES) was established to evaluate the damage and to follow the husbandry and farming situation.

Because I am aware of the lack of the state's material and financial means I believed it was necessary to ask for the assistance of all our fellow citizens in helping our rural population hurt by the drought.

The remarkable response brought forth by appeals on behalf of our breeders and farmers surpassed all hopes and proved that national solidarity was not an empty word.

This is the time to reiterate the thanks of the national administration for the willingness of all those who wanted to contribute, despite their modest means, to alleviate the suffering of those hit by disaster.

These thanks are particularly for our businessmen who have placed considerable funds at the disposal of the authorities despite an unfavorable economic situation.

Our workers' spirit of sacrifice is also worthy of praise. The rise in prices, the salary freeze and all other sorts of difficulties have in no way thwarted their determination to go forward in building an independent, united and prosperous Mauritania.

The solidarity and cohesion shown under these circumstances by our fellow citizens prove to those who are only satisfied when they find intoxication and mystification that our people have never been so united and confident in their future.

My dear compatriots,

The unrelenting obstacles of the worldwide recession and the drought certainly considerably upset the economic and financial recovery plan set up by the Military Committee for National Salvation but they have not shaken our faith in the appropriateness of our choices. This plan is, therefore, being applied in its entirety with determination and force.

In the financial area various improvement measures have been decreed and implemented. An important place has been given to collecting bank debts, taxes and duties of all sorts.

In the area of fishing, the implementation of the policy adopted in 1979 has just entered a decisive stage with the creation of the Mauritanian Fish Marketing Company.

In the mining and industry sector the recent opening of the Guelbs mining facility will enable the SNIM-SEM [National Industrial and Mining Company] to increase its activity and to make a more significant contribution to the social and economic development of the country.

The recent discovery of a sizable deposit of phosphates in the southern portion of the country is another important factor on the road to progress.

As for rural development, my several visits to the interior of the country enabled me to find out about the many problems affecting this sector.

The evaluative factors currently available to us lead us to envisage an effective use of this vital sector which will result in the goal of self-sufficiency in food.

To do this, the number of dams and retaining walls will be multiplied. A special, continuing interest will be maintained in looking for pools of water and drilling many wells.

In a climate where drought has become a structural phenomenon, controlling water will henceforth be an important aspect of our development policy.

My dear compatriots,

If, because of the international economic crisis and the drought which hit our country hard this year, we have not yet entirely succeeded in turning around a situation that existed after 20 years of bad management, nothing should shake our determination to continue the battle in order to ensure progress and prosperity for our country.

To reach this goal we must readjust our economic and financial recovery plan to adapt to the new situation. We must also mobilize all the active forces of our people to better consolidate our unity and sovereignty.

This means that we need all of our resolve to continually combat to our last drop of energy any interference, no matter what the source, in our domestic affairs.

This attitude is equalled only by our constant concern to work in order to continually strengthen cooperation and solidarity among peoples.

This is the time to mention our sincere desire to maintain confident relations with all peace-, freedom- and justice-loving nations.

In our northwest African region this year we proclaimed our recognition of the Saharan Democratic Arab Republic, in light of our brother's, the Kingdom of Morocco's, refusal to apply the resolution of the 19th Summit of the OAU pertaining to the western Sahara.

However, this decision in no way modifies our position of neutrality in this fratricidal conflict. We continue to think that direct negotiations between Moroccans and Saharans is the most appropriate method to reach a just and lasting peace in this portion of the continent.

Our recent approval of the Inter-North African Treaty of Brotherhood and Cooperation will no doubt help to strengthen the links of friendship, brotherhood and profitable cooperation between the countries of the region.

The normalization of our relations with the brother Kingdom of Morocco is predicated upon sincere and correct application of the Taef Agreement and upon strict observance of the universal principles of peaceful coexistence.

As for Chad, we have placed a great deal of hope in the willingness of the Chadians to be present at the conference scheduled for Brazzaville in order to peacefully and definitively resolve their conflict while preserving the integrity of their land and the unity of their people.

In the Middle East we will reiterate our constant support for the valiant Palestinian combattants who offer heroic resistance to the Zionist enemy in Palestine and in occupied southern Lebanon.

While condemning the pernicious maneuvers of the Zionists aimed at dividing the Palestinian combattants we again proclaim our solidarity with the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) and its legal administration.

Our support is also extended to the Lebanese people who are victims of the Zionist aggression. We fervently hope that the agreement recently initiated between the various factions will lead to peace, stability and unity of this brother country.

In the Islamic world the Iraq-Iran war continues to worry us. The recent escalation of this conflict and the possibility that it will extend to all the countries in the region should encourage the international community to assume its responsibilities and to find grounds for agreement between the warring parties. We believe that this is the only way that is liable to end this absurd war which opposes two brother Muslim countries and seriously threatens international peace and security.

In Southern Africa we denounce the recent schemings of the racist regime in Pretoria which, in the guise of inconsistent reforms is trying to win the sympathy of certain brother countries.

We reaffirm our unshakeable faith in our brother Namibians and Azaniens, who are continuing their heroic struggle against the South African war machine to regain their dignity and freedom.

My dear compatriots,

On this memorable day I once again proclaim our attachment to the ideals of peace and progress in conformance with the spirit and philosophy of the movement of 10 July.

Armed with our faith in Allah and strengthened by the support of our working masses, we will never abandon the path of national salvation that we have chosen and that our people has largely approved.

The path is long and strewn with many obstacles but we must persevere and make the maximum number of sacrifices to lift our country from underdevelopment.

It is with this in mind that I encourage you in particular to do more voluntary work and to put the more important interest of the nation above all individual, selfish interests.

Our society must henceforth be devoid of negative and irresponsible attitudes such as waste, laziness and prevarication. With this as a basis the Military Committee for National Salvation and the government have more firmly than ever decided to create the conditions appropriate to the development of the Mauritanian man and to favor in all respects his effective participation in the development process.

Within this framework the Structures for Educating the Masses have been asked to play a prime role. They must spare nothing in putting all of our human and moral potentials at the service of the sacred cause of national progress.

We remain convinced that by using our Islamic faith as a source of inspiration and by counting first of all on our own forces we will be able to accomplish other tasks and to win new victories on the path to recovery.

FOREIGN TRADE INCREASE EXAMINED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 63, 23 Jun 84 p 66

[Article: "Moroccan Imports Stabilize, Trade with Saudi Arabia Grows"]

[Text] Moroccan Minister of Trade, Industry and Tourism Azeddine Guessous announced that the volume of trade between Morocco and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is steadily growing. It rose from 211.6 million dirhams in 1977 to 2,735 billion dirhams in 1982. The most significant imports were in oil which represented 93.3 percent of the total. Exports consisted of acids which were in first place with 47.7 percent of the total, cotton material with 19.4 percent, household furniture with 13.5 percent and textiles with 11.6 percent.

The minister explained that a feature of Moroccan-Saudi trade is that it is based on a customs and trade agreement providing for the exemption from customs fees, wholly or partially, of commodities traded between the two countries.

As for Morocco's trade relations with nations of the outside world, the Moroccan minister explained that during 11 months of 1983, trade grew on the average of 3.2 percent over the same 11 months of 1982. The minister explained with figures that Morocco's trade relations grew from 24.4 billion dirhams in 1982 to 35.2 billion dirhams in 1983.

In comparing Moroccan exports and imports during the same period, he noted that imports dwindled in 1983 an average of 2.1 percent, or .47 billion dirhams, while exports rose 15 percent, or 1.6 billion dirhams. This indicates that this rise occurred in the domain of foodstuff exports which achieved significant growth in 1983 compared to the previous year.

As for enrichment products, semi-manufactures, Azeddine Gessous pointed out that they experienced steady growth in 1983, especially fertilizer products, phosphoric acid, certain chemical products, textiles and ready-to-wear clothing.

According to Azeddine Gessous, imports remained the same as in 1982, with the exception of Morocco's imports of oil and certain primary products, such as sulfur used for the fertilizer industry, which registered certain gains.

In connection with tourism which is included in the functions of his ministry, Azeddine Gessous explained the particular importance of this sector of the national economy. He indicated that the tourism sector contributed 7 percent of net national product and brought the state tax revenues amounting to between 2 and 3 percent of all regular income in the state budget.

He said that due to efforts made in this domain, Morocco has an ample, well-developed capacity to accommodate tourists. He noted that the number of tourists in 1983 increased by 4 percent over 1982. There were a total of nearly 1.9 million tourists who spent \$450 million in 1983, an increase of 22 percent over 1982.

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EDUCATIONAL POLICIES ISSUE REVIEWED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 63, 23 Jun 84 p 16

[Article by Abu Bakr al-Sadiq al-Sharif: "Educational Measure Turns Into a Crisis: Parties Use It in Elections"]

[Text] The democratization of education is one of the permanent slogans raised by all Moroccan parties, without exception. However, the span of contemporary Moroccan history indicates that the national consensus is the cornerstone of resolutions adopted in this domain. The nation's constitution contains a clause confirming the necessity of creating a supreme council on education as a framework for guidance, debate and discussion of educational matters due to their strong connection with the development and growth of the country.

On 5 September 1983, the Moroccan Council of Ministers adopted a resolution calling for a review of the problem of education and its reorganization to fit the requirements of the country. The political parties, it seems, since all of them were not then represented in the council, were expecting the resolution to be based on an experiment similar to that of the summer of 1981 in Ifran when a conference was held by invitation of King Hassan II. Political parties and various organizations in the field of education participated. They discussed the problems of education in the country and wrote down their concept of the future of education.

It seems that this did not happen in connection with the above-mentioned cabinet resolution. Minister of National Education Dr Azeddine Laraki, according to reports here, put the cabinet resolution into effect on his personal initiative. He issued organizational memoranda and amendments, on the basis of which children born in 1979 were prohibited from taking examinations for the secondary school diploma (Baccalaureat).

The various Moroccan national newspapers have treated this matter from different angles. What the observer can follow from behind the lines is the fact that the Istiqlal Party, to which the minister belongs, is facing an acute crisis which is threatening its future with many difficulties, especially with the legislative elections coming up soon.

Journalistic circles have linked these measures with proposals the World Bank submitted to Morocco to help it emerge from the current economic crisis.

According to these circles, the application of these proposals is to be carried out on a step-by-step basis. These same circles believe that the measures contain a plan to put an end to long-term education and turn instead toward vocational training to produce skilled workers. These circles have said they obtained information indicating that technical committees have been set up to draft a memorandum introducing a registration fee for university students, with a view to financing education. They have said that there are resolutions to be announced by the ministry which aim at limiting the growth of the sector of higher and university education. This will lead to a reduction in the growth of knowledge and will violate the national sovereignty of the country.

The parties in general, including the Istiqlal Party to which the minister belongs, have put aside their immediate political differences, inevitably kindled by the winds of the election and have dealt with this problem in a nearly united fashion.

Ahmed Osman, leader of the National Rally of Independents Party, has considered these measures to be a subject which must be made the basis for drafting a national pact on education. Successive governments would be bound to apply it and carry it out, no matter what their ideas and convictions.

Before his party's national council which was convened on 20 May, he said, "It is not right to put into effect the measures which responsible official circles intend to apply to students entering the various stages of education and students enrolling in universities, without first studying them in a profound, scientific manner, with the participation of those concerned and with their consent to include those measures in the comprehensive reform of education."

The popular base of the Socialist Union of Popular Forces Party headed by Abderrahim Bouabid is composed of students, school teachers and professors. It seems that it decided to present its position through the National Teachers' Union which held its fifth congress between 25 and 27 May this year with slogans such as "Defense of the Right to Education, Graduates' Right to Work," and "Teachers' Right to Improve Working Conditions." In addition, opinions expounded by its press on the subject were limited to criticism of the measures taken and an appeal to annul them.

The party of Progress and Socialism led by Ali Yata treated the matter as a serious problem dangerously infringing upon the constitutional rights of citizens. It noted that the goal of the Ministry of National Education was well-known. It was to introduce a policy of austerity in a vital field and save some money, even at the expense of the advancement of education in the country. Naturally this was on instruction from the International Monetary Fund. He said, "The consensus of political forces on this subject is manifest, healthy and complete."

The Istiqlal Party was founded by Alal El-Fasi. It is headed by M'Hamed Boucetta. Various parties insist on holding it responsible for the crisis,

since the minister who adopted the measures is a member of it and is even considered to be one of its political symbols. He is a member of both the executive committee and the central committee. For many years he has held the portfolio of the Ministry of National Education which he directs. Until recently it was the most important channel through which the party sought to put its slogans into effect. The Moroccan citizen always connects efforts to Arabize education with the slogan raised by the Istiqlal Party in this regard and with the role its party and information organs have played in defense of any step in this direction.

From this angle, the current crisis appears to be moving in the direction of removing the fuse within this party whose internal life is surrounded by strict secrecy.

Moreover, at a meeting of party counselors in the municipal and village councils, M'Hamed Boucetta said, "Measures which may tend to unjustly impede the pursuit of education are unacceptable and unwarranted." He confirmed the necessity of making it possible for every Moroccan male and female to obtain education, stating, "The means to do this exist, even though they are insufficient."

The National Bureau of School Children of the Istiqlal Party has also treated the problem from the same point of view. However, it did note the attempt by political parties to use these measures for election propaganda. It issued a statement on 21 May of this year, in protest against any measures which tend to infringe upon the basic rights of the people, in the forefront of which is their right to education. It warned national public opinion about "the campaign aiming at flattering the masses for the purposes of the election." The statement demanded annulling the above-mentioned measures, striving earnestly to treat the problems of education within the context of confronting the general crisis, following the choices of the people, and making transitional measures more objective and far-removed from the viciousness of rigid calculations and figures.

Far from the pavillions of political parties, the Moroccan man on the street views the matter in its entirety as a twofold crisis. Informed circles in Rabat believe that the measures which have begun to be implemented are closely connected to the economic crisis which the country faces. The gravity of these measures is concealed in moving the imprints of the crisis into the social domain which has enjoyed a great deal of stability throughout recent history. In concluding their commentary, these circles say that the measures themselves point out the crisis of party commitment to a society which has adopted liberalization as a basis for political and economic activity.

One observation remains. Minister of Education Azeddine Laraki took the initiative to carry out the resolutions in a personal manner which put the party, according to its leader, in an unenviable position. This is especially true because the elections are coming up soon, and the democratization of education is a most important slogan with particular impact on the psyche of the Moroccan voter.

THIRD DEFENSIVE WALL BARS POLISARIO FROM ATLANTIC

Paris LE MONDE in French 21 Jun 84 p 6

[Article by Paul Balta]

[Text] Agadir--Haouza and Jdiria have practically been wiped off the map. At least for the moment. Those two towns in the Western Sahara--Colonel Arzaz, commander of the Oued Draa sector, corrects me by saying it is the "Moroccan Sahara"--have been isolated by the third "wall" of defense, stretching 320 kilometers, that was built by the Royal Armed Forces [FAR] along the edge of the Zag between 19 April and 10 May.

At his staff command post in Agadir, Colonel Major Bennani, commander of the southern zone and successor to General Dlimi, whose chief assistant he had been, explained to me: "Haouza is not a strategic point. There is no water, and it is a dead end. But we are getting annoyed at seeing the alleged Saharan Government date its communiques from Haouza and POLISARIO thumb its nose at us by claiming to control the territory and taking reporters as far as the Atlantic."

But for the SDAR, which was proclaimed by POLISARIO on 27 February 1976, Haouza's value was more than that of a symbol. After retaking it from the Moroccans in 1979, the Saharans took advantage of the rocky and hilly site to turn caves into hiding places and dig tunnels in which they set up living quarters. One Moroccan officer admits: "They were quite elaborate mazes that could not be detected from the sky." The Saharan fighters also took advantage of the shelter provided by the trees in the valley to assemble undetected, as we had seen during a previous visit in 1981 (see LE MONDE, 26 February and 7 April 1981).

On this trip, our helicopter flew over the locality before landing near a group of buildings that were no longer more than ruins. Its features were clearly identifiable, especially the small fort built by the British at the top of a peak in the last century--around 1880, according to POLISARIO fighters--and the vegetable garden being cultivated by those fighters at the edge of the wadi. This time it was another Moor, Lieutenant Salek, a veteran from the Ait Lahsen tribe, who was in charge.

Colonel Major Bennani had told us in Agadir: "From the tactical point of view, Jdiria offers several advantages. From there one can control the territories of the Aider Massif and ensure the security of Tan Tan Province and the Zag Plain." When our Puma landed, I had trouble recognizing that small town of some 1,800 inhabitants which POLISARIO had retaken on 4 June 1979. Three years ago, the houses, the Spanish administration buildings, and the Tercio barracks had still been standing, although most of the roofs had caved in and a few walls showed holes or cracks. The Saharans had told us: "The Moroccans dynamited and shelled the place before they left." This time, the Moroccans were turning the argument back on them. I recognized only one of the two water towers--the other is apparently new--and it was the one on which the Saharan flag had been flying the time before. The water towers now overlook about 100 impressive piles of rubble collected by the FAR's bulldozers.

Vigilance the Rule

That was all that remained of Jdiria. The FAR had built landing sites for helicopters and a building where we were served refreshments. On the way to Smara, the holy city of Ma el Ainin, our helicopter followed the wall but stayed well within the protected perimeter. Despite a somewhat relaxed atmosphere, vigilance is still the rule. "Our opponents have antiaircraft defenses," said Colonel Ouali, commander of the Saguia el Hamra sector, by way of explanation. The governor of Smara is Dkhil Khalil, a Reguibat merchant. He explained to us that the reconstruction of Haouza and Jdiria is being contemplated. "But the problem will be to persuade the inhabitants who live here and have grown accustomed to a degree of comfort to return there."

Another important stop was Amgala, recognizable by its houses of brownish-black flat stone, its wells, and the mighty massif that protects it. Located on the Mauritanian border, it is a key center because of its trails and compulsory crossing points leading to Tindouf in Algeria through Tifariti and Bir Lahlou, to Bir Moghrein in Mauritania, and to El Aaiun and Bu Craa in northwestern Western Sahara. The wall has blocked off those routes: to get to Guelta Zemmur or attack Dakhla on the Atlantic coast, POLISARIO will now have to go through Mauritania. If it does, will Rabat consider that a "casus belli" with Nouakchott or will it exercise a right of pursuit?

Colonel Keji, commander of the sector, took us to a base of operations along the wall 5 kilometers from the town, which had been emptied of its inhabitants under Moroccan shelling and machinegunning as a consequence of the confrontation early in 1976 between Algerian forces and the FAR--which is still holding about 100 prisoners. This fortified position, with its machineguns aimed at the Ouentergat Wadi and the valley located in Mauritanian territory, reveals the strategic value of Amgala. And just as they did in the north, the Saharan fighters put up a stiff fight to prevent the defensive line from advancing, but Colonel Major Bennani says that in this sector, POLISARIO Inspector Fretit and Hmada, commander of Saharan armored units, were killed and Ahmed El Battal, the region's commander, was wounded after abandoning five Czechoslovakian-made T-55 tanks on the field. Their odometers showed only 1,800 kilometers.

Leaving Agadir in a helicopter with a group of about 15 reporters, I was able in just a few hours to fly over the thousands of kilometers it had taken me several days to cover in a POLISARIO Land Rover. The extent of the wall of defense is impressive. It was constructed in four phases illustrating the stages in this war in the sand.

At the start of the conflict, the Moroccans had put up semicircular fortified walls around the main towns. Being perfectly familiar with the terrain, the Saharans had scarcely any difficulty getting around them. At the time, POLISARIO's strategy consisted of forcing the FAR to stretch its defenses to the limit so as to carry out surprise attacks on supply convoys and the garrisons scattered around in isolated localities. They were also able to make incursions into southern Morocco and undertake direct psychological and political action among the Saharan inhabitants who had remained in El Aaiun, their political capital, and Smara, their religious capital.

Embankments Stretching 1,200 Kilometers

Mauritania's withdrawal from the conflict and the peace agreement concluded with POLISARIO in August 1979 enabled the latter to concentrate its attacks in the north and inflict humiliating defeats on the FAR. The turning point for Rabat came after the battle of Ouarkziz, especially in El Bouirat and Zag. Giving up the idea of holding excessively vulnerable isolated positions, General Dlimi suggested to Hassan II that a 600-kilometer-long wall be built to isolate the "useful triangle," where most of the population and the bulk of the phosphates are concentrated. Begun in August 1980, the first 300 kilometers led to Smara in March 1981, and from there the wall was extended first to El Aaiun after skirting Bu Craa and then to Boujdour.

In September 1983, POLISARIO, which moved freely throughout the territory but was stymied by the wall, unleashed an offensive on a 50-kilometer front near Smara. It committed five mechanized battalions, 80 tanks, and some 5,000 men to the operation and claims to have occupied five positions for several days and disorganized the radar detection system, the centerpiece in the defense system.

It was that attack, followed by a few others on a smaller scale, that reportedly led the king to order construction of the second wall, this one 300 kilometers long. Starting from Bu Craa on 19 December 1983, the bulldozers reached Amgala on 10 January 1984 and completed their loop at Khreibichat on 20 February. Designed to include Jdiria and Haouza, the third wall (320 kilometers long) was begun at Zag on 19 April and connected with the second wall on 10 May. Colonel Major Bennani points out: "Since the start, we have built a total of 2,000 kilometers. Allowing for the obsolete sections, 1,200 kilometers are still operational, including the belt 150 kilometers wide and 30 kilometers deep that protects Dakhla."

He explains that it is "an electronic, magnetic, and ballistic system" in which the invisible components are more important than those that can be seen--that is, the sand embankment that stands from 2 to 3 meters high and is protected by barbed wire and minefields. According to him, 120,000 square kilometers out

of the 266,000 making up the territory have thus been "made secure." He says: "We have blocked infiltration by the guerrillas and made the inhabitants safe from their influence. We have established lines of communication, built tarred roads, and extended telephone service from the El Aaiun area to the Zag area to intensify exchanges between the northern and southern parts of the country."

At certain points, the wall is currently only 40 or 50 kilometers from the Algerian border, and at Amgala it touches the Mauritanian border. The commander of the southern zone insists that the wall is a "mobile military bridgehead," and he hints that it might be extended even further to cover all of the 3,500 kilometers regarded by Morocco as constituting the land frontier of its "recovered Saharan provinces."

"War Is Over"

The atmosphere in the army has changed since our previous visit to the "useful triangle." The soldiers feel less vulnerable, and Moroccan officers have acquired more self-assurance and achieved close familiarity with the terrain. Even certain taboos have disappeared: they now talk naturally about POLISARIO, admit that it has "good" fighters, and no longer refer to them systematically as "mercenaries." Sober and precise in their analysis, they emphasize the points they have scored but avoid any triumphalism and do not say, as some civilians do, that "the war is over" or that "we have won the war."

It is true that the FAR's hold on the terrain will require heavy financial sacrifices in addition to the considerable investments made by the state in all areas in El Aaiun and Smara to win over the inhabitants. POLISARIO leaders know that all they have to do to immobilize an army of some 200,000 men is to keep up their pressure, and they have not concealed their hope of seeing the economic crisis bring about the collapse of the monarchy or force the king to accept the "direct negotiations" advocated by the OAU. Conversely, reduced activity and the absence of spectacular successes may also lead to a loss of enthusiasm in the Saharan ranks or engender in them a feeling of weariness.

The Moroccans say that both diplomatically and militarily, POLISARIO has made up for the--apparently partial--defection by Colonel al-Qadhdhafi with increased support from Imam Khomeiny, who is nursing many grievances toward the kingdom because it took in the shah. Moreover, diplomatic action remains Morocco's weak point, and its opponents have succeeded in nibbling away at its positions in black Africa. And it is probably to avoid a defeat at the next OAU summit meeting that Hassan II is threatening to leave that organization if it gives the SDAR a seat and that he is multiplying his "faits accomplis" in the field, hoping in that way to make the situation irreversible.

11798

CSO: 4519/190

IRAQ

TRADE UNIONS MEET TO DISCUSS INDUSTRY FUTURE

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 62, 16 Jun 84 p 62

[Article: "Economic Effects of the Map of Projects"]

[Text] The Center for Research and Studies of the Iraqi General Federation of Trade Unions held its first scientific conference, during the middle of last May, concerning the economic and social effects of the distribution of industrial projects in Iraq. The conference was opened by Taha Yasin Ramadan, the first deputy prime minister, with a speech in which he referred to the considerable influence of industrial projects in Iraq. The conference was opened by Taha Yasin Ramadan, the first deputy prime minister, with a speech in which he referred to the considerable influence of industrial projects on social stability and cultural progress. He made it clear that the July Revolution adhered to the true scientific direction toward establishing strategic industries and considered the industrial sector the basic axis upon which the pillars of the Iraqi economy must be built. This has resulted in achieving good fruits; all Iraqi cities have enjoyed widespread and comprehensive progress, which has multiplied in time of war.

Then, Ahmad Muhsin al-Walimi, head of the General Federation of Trade Unions, delivered a speech, in which he said:

The building of Iraq is a cultural matter and can only be achieved through closely connected efforts. Based on this premise, the federation is submitting working papers and research in cooperation with a number of experts, professors from the universities and scientific centers and officials from the various state sectors.

Several fundamental goals were defined for the conference:

1. To study the multiple facets of the industrial pillar.
2. To analyze the factors of industrial settlement, and the effects stemming from it on the national economy in general, and industry in particular.
3. To ascertain the problems and difficulties that the Iraqi working class experiences in this field, and to propose appropriate solutions for them.
4. To issue scientific and realistic recommendations and treatment which could be of benefit in the field of application and, in light of that, to formulate four

closely related crucial points that the conference's research and discussions can cover, along the following lines:

1. Geographic distribution of industrial projects according to size of labor force, investment capital, specific distribution (industry according to its branch, added value, employees' compensations, salaries and benefits), as well as distribution according to property, public, mixed, cooperative or private.
2. The reasons and factors of the industrial pillar, particularly in light of its sources of financing, proximity to markets and raw materials, sources of energy, level of abundance of supportive construction and labor, in addition to the policies of support.
3. Effects resulting from industrial settlement, especially economic, social, demographic and environmental.
4. Problems and difficulties that labor faces in industrial projects and proposed solutions, especially in light of the availability of education, cultural services, housing, transportation, communications, health services, vocational training and daily living requirements.

For 3 days, over 8 working sessions, the conference discussed 15 studies covering all the main defined crucial points, in addition to 6 working papers submitted by the Ministries of Planning, Light Industry, Industry and Minerals, Oil, Housing and Construction and Labor and Social Affairs. They also used nine studies as background data for the conference topics.

The participants in the concluding session approved many of the recommendations and proposals that could help the planning and other specialized agencies to select locations for industrial projects efficiently and to determine directions of industrial settlement, especially to confirm the need to consider the principle of strategic security, in view of the fact that it has become incumbent upon the progressive and developing state to elucidate a policy for the distribution and dispersal of industry, especially the pivotal industries, in all its geographical areas. This is in harmony with its strategic hope and the call to strengthen and expand industrial distribution for the growth of those least developed areas, which could guarantee the stability of labor forces, put an end to migration, and reduce the disparity in levels of income, along with taking into consideration the economic and social reality of the areas, the nature of the requirements of establishing the project, the specific specialities of the industry, and the economic resources available. There must also be coordination of statistical resources, a guarantee of the free flow of information and the need to take into account demographic characteristics (age, age groups and sex) when establishing industrial complexes and providing suitable services to them. There should be concern with developing a sector's cohesion of economic activities within a single area, as well as within one sector's activities among various areas. This can be done through creating central, regional planning units for each governorate, with the job of preparing and coordinating these plans. This could put an end to the usurpation of fertile agricultural lands by industrial projects, and stop the building advance toward these lands, along with considering the question of a balance between industrial and agricultural considerations.

LEBANON

LEBANESE CURRENCY SEEN IN DANGER

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 383, 22 Jun 84 pp 63-64

[Article: "Armies Nibble at Lebanon, While the Dollar Nibbles at the Pound"]

[Text] Did the government of Prime Minister Rashid Karami go to the National Assembly to read the ministerial statement so that the people would think that a fundamental object of merit had occurred and that the government had been able to overcome a 'stumbling block'? However, reading the statement and beginning the special sessions to debate it have not had a positive effect on the country, either in the field of security along the contact lines or on the exchange rate of the pound in the field of economics. What happened was that while the deputies were debating the ministerial statement in consecutive sessions, the price of the dollar was making great strides in the Lebanese exchange market. In this month of June, it has reached 606 Lebanese piasters. This is a record price that Beirut has not seen since last February as a result of the flareup of incidents in West Beirut and the southern suburbs.

The fact is that there are circumstances surrounding the two record prices. Last February, there was a widespread security blowup, extending from the mountains to Beirut and its suburbs, reaching to the Kasrawan coast. Because of that, the banks were closed for 10 days, since it was impossible to engage in business as a result in the disruption of all services, including electricity, communications and roads. At that time, the price of the dollar fluctuated between 600 and 620 piasters, but this was a false price, beyond the scope of the banking system. It was not set in accordance with the principle of supply and demand, but rather, according to the wishes of certain banks and some money changers who deal in banknotes. As for the record price that occurred recently, it was through organized banking action and as a result of the law of supply and demand. Moreover, the recent rise in the price of the dollar came after a series of political developments, which some thought would be the beginning of at least relaxation and truce. This retreat in the price of the pound came after the following developments:

1. The Syrian-Lebanese summit meeting, which occurred on 29 February and resulted in a significant security blowup.
2. The holding of the national dialogue conference in Lausanne between 12 and 20 March and the issuance of a minimum of agreement on a cease fire and the formation of a constituent organization.

4. The tasking of Prime Minister Rashid Karami to form the national unity government, which included most of the political persuasions.

5. The meeting among themselves of most of the fighting factions, especially the meeting in Bikfayya between the head of the Progressive Socialist Party, Walid Junblatt, and the commander of the Lebanese Forces, Fadi Afram.

Despite all of that, the exchange rate of the Lebanese pound showed no real revival. For limited periods of time there was activity, as a result of speculations aimed at buying the dollar at reduced prices in order to sell it later at high prices. Accordingly, the dollar continued to go up throughout May, and by the end had improved by 2.65 percent. The improvement continued through this month, and the dollar exceeded the 6 pound barrier. If we try to explain the continued drop in the price of the pound, the only reason we shall find for that is a lack of confidence in the future of Lebanon as a nation and a government, as well as its economic future, on all levels. Where does this lack of confidence appear?

On the governmental level, it is apparent that the formation of the 10-man government was not generated by a previous agreement among its members, but rather, was a means to achieve a future agreement. With the formation, several problems were highlighted, from Minister Nabih Birri's rejection to the change in the portfolios, from President Sulayman Franjiyah's boycott to the freezing of this change, from the disputes over the venue for the cabinet meeting to the agreement on the presidential palace in B'abda, and from the problem with the ministerial statement to the general agreement among them over its text. Through all of that, it was clear that the government was not the fruit of an accord, but rather, it came about in order to be a gateway to accord. Accordingly, the display of its formation, the ministerial statement and going to Parliament paled before the political and security problems and difficulties that it faced in all these stages. On the security level, the contact lines continued ablaze. Shortly before each political action, there was a security escalation. In addition, the government was unable to open the crossing points or to open the airport and the port and, consequently, did not accomplish anything that could have a reflection on the economic situation as a whole. On the security level, it was clear that the disputes still exist, especially over the question of the army, which was one reason in the opening of the ports and the crossing points. Moreover, Israel is trying to block any agreement, whether through increasing its pressure in the South or through blackmail over the issue of the liaison office in Dubayyah. These factors collectively have caused the people to have a lack of confidence, and this situation has been reflected in the exchange rate of the pound and the constant increase in the demand for the dollar, while the supply dwindles. This climate has not achieved any relaxation on the economic level. The government has gone increasingly into debt, in view of the continued cutoff of resources. The debt increased 3 billion pounds in 5 months. The balance of payments has continued to register an increasing shortfall, from about \$400 million at the end of the first quarter to about \$500 million by the end of the 5th month. Lebanese remittances from abroad continued to be extremely limited, whether due to the Lebanese situation or because of the unrest existing in the Gulf states. The Lebanese banking sector, which has continued to be exempt

throughout the past few years, in which it displayed well-known faults, has shared in this shaking of confidence to some extent, despite the non-radical treatment.

For the first time, the shakiness of the sector and its exposure to an active season to rumors, has had a significant role in causing the Lebanese to convert their savings not only into dollars, but also to put them outside of the banking system. Despite the closure of the airport and ports, the flight of capital continues abroad, while other exporting is impossible. In addition to all these negative, local factors, during this period the Lebanese exchange market has experienced two other fears:

1. The fear of a military confrontation between Syria and Israel in al-Biqa' valley, strengthened by the sporadic raids launched by Israel against certain positions. This fear was a reason for people not saving or being reluctant to.
2. The fear of military developments in the Gulf area leading to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. This would definitely and immediately lead to a considerable rise in the price of the dollar abroad.

Thus, local and regional factors came together, resulting in a kind of lack of confidence and causing the pound to lose its ability to confront the monetary and political pressures that it faced. As a result of that, the pound has continued to backslide, even at times in which the dollar has receded abroad, including the time of the difficulties faced by the American banks preoccupied with the huge debts in the Latin American nations. In this regard the monetary authorities were unable to confront the decline in the exchange rate, neither by the Bank of Lebanon intervening to buy dollars to support the pound, for fear that it would decline further, nor by the interest rising, since the interest on the dollar and the pound does not form any protection for it.

Therefore, the pound's exchange rate has declined, because there is still a search for confidence, and it is not to be found. It is no longer possible to reclaim the lost confidence through formalistic solutions, but rather, it must be done through tangible accomplishments that reflect a basic and fundamental agreement on the course of events.

7005

CSO: 4404/537

LEBANON

BRIEFS

INSURANCE PAYMENTS IN 1983--The value of net insurance payments for all branches in those firms operating in Lebanon amounted to 293.7 million pounds during 1983, compared with 228 million during 1982, i.e., an increase of 65.7 million pounds or 28.8 percent. The payments were distributed through the various branches as follows: life insurance, 78 million pounds; fire, 30.9 million pounds; transportation, 32 million pounds; accidents, 78 million pounds; automobile, 50 million pounds. In addition, there was 12 million for 12 firms that did not state the value of payments made. [Text] [Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 383, 22 Jun 84 p 51] 7005

MAY INDUSTRIAL STATISTICS--It is clear from the industrial statistics in Lebanon for last May that the "certificate of inspection" that the National Council for Foreign Economic Relations issues for goods exported to Saudi Arabia is not necessary. As evidence of that, the record of the certificates does not express the true volume of exports. According to the Directorate General for Industries, the value of exports to Saudi Arabia was 64 million pounds during the month of May, while the value of the certificates of inspection issued from the council totalled 33 million pounds for a month and a half, i.e., the equivalent of 22 million pounds for last month. Therefore, the invoices accompanying the certificate of inspection represent only 30 percent of the exports. Note that there are invoices that have not yet been certified in the Directorate General for Industry. [Text] [Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 383, 22 Jun 84 p 51] 7005

CS0: 4404/537

ISRAELI ATTACK ON 'AYN AL-HULWAH CAMP DESCRIBED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 226, 9-15 Jun 84 pp 22-23

[Article by Zaki Shihab: "The Fire Under the Ashes of 'Ayn al-Hulwah!"]

[Text] "AL-MAJALLAH" visited the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp near Sidon in South Lebanon, and examined the aftermath of the massacre that the Israelis recently committed against the Palestinian refugee population of the camp. The result was as follows:

'Ayn al-Hulwah camp, in spite of what its name implies [Spring of Sweet Waters], shed blood and bitterness for a long time until the sweetness of heroism was returned two months ago. For during the first phase of its occupation, Israel was able to place collaborators in the Palestinian camp near Sidon, the most prominent of whom were 'Abdallah Nasir, Abu Sultan, and Fikri Fa'ur. It made 'Abdallah Nasir the head of the "Palestinian National Guard" and supported him with all its might. He appeared early in the occupation, and it seemed as if he would be able to play an effective role, because the Palestinians in that camp and in others were suffering from problems associated with the presence of orphans and with isolation. He came, claiming to be able to offer them services. However, no sooner had the people of the camp regained some of their self confidence, when 'Abdallah Nasir's project collapsed taking him with it, and his true nature was unmasked: a Palestinian working in West Germany, married to a German woman. He had been picked up by "Mosad", which after brainwashing him had sent him to Israel, which gave him Israeli citizenship, trained him, and then put him over the 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp. In the end he became an outcast, without a role.

"Abu Sultan" was one of the toughs that had at some point infiltrated the ranks of the resistance. After the resistance left, he contacted Israel asking that his authority continue. Israel welcomed him, trained him at their installations, and made it easy for him to communicate with his family in Nablus. Then it returned him to 'Ayn al-Hulwah, where he was able to form his own organization out of fringe elements of the resistance whose determination had weakened. However, it was not long before this organization fell apart, and "Abu Sultan" was not able to protect himself from the wrath of the resistance, which killed him 2 days before the Israeli attack on the camp.

As for Fikri Fa'ur, he was a doctor in the camp, who after Israel's entry established a charitable social organization to look after Palestinian affairs in the south, and it seems that he did not have a firm belief in the advantage of dealing with Israel, because after he had tried that for a while and seen the strong popular reaction to his efforts and methods and felt the Israeli arrogance, he left Lebanon in despair and chose to reside in the United States.

These three symbols of collaboration with Israel are symbols of a phase which it seems the Palestinians of Lebanon have finally gotten beyond, especially after the strong international, Arab and local outcry against the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, and after the Liberation Organization's success in getting the release of the Ansar prisoners.

No sooner had those arrested gotten out of their prison, when the morale of the large Palestinian camp ('Ayn al-Hulwah) changed, along with the morale of all the other camps. Two months ago nationalist leaflets became common, attacking collaboration and collaborators, while resistance bullets appeared to punish those who strayed, and the Palestinian refugee regained his enterprising spirit. The camp interacted with the spirit prevailing throughout the south, as the Lebanese turned out one martyr after another, and men of religion having important positions died following this path, men like Shaykh Raghīb Harb.

"AL-MAJALLAH" visited the camp the morning after the attack launched against it by the Israeli forces along with their collaborators. The atmosphere was still charged, and what happened to the camp is still being talked about throughout Sidon. The driver of the car that took me from Riyad al-Sulh square in Sidon to the camp said to me: "You might not be able to get into the camp, because 'Abu 'Akr's' elements fired on the people while they were demonstrating, and a woman fell covered in blood . . . God save us from the bastards." The northern entrance to the camp was blocked by rocks and burning tires. The marks of the rocks and burnings still seemed to be fresh. I got out of the car, while activity seemed to be all but non-existent. No one was in the streets except those who had been overtaken by the events and were outside their home.. One of the friends who lived near the entrance to the camp summarized what had happened recently, saying: "First of all, understand our situation and allow me to ask you not to mention my name or print my picture, for things are as you see them. More than two months ago, specifically since those being held in the Ansar prison were released, the camp regained its spirit and life began to stir in it again. The camp used to look more like a gathering of women, girls, widows, the elderly and adolescent children, but now the situation has changed, the change being the result of a number of circumstances, one of which was that the atmosphere surrounding the camp affected it within. The atmosphere used to be watchful and wary, but now it is filled with hostility against the occupier and fights against him. Israel's collaborators did as their kind did in all the southern villages: spying, stealing, demanding money, and harrasing those whom they knew to have a nationalistic stance opposing cooperation with the occupier, even calling for a fight against him. The situation remained thus until the young men's patience came to an end and

they decided to confront the elements of the 'Guard' and the 'Grouping' that kept watch over (or, controlled) the camp. From the moment they made this decision, things changed, and the streets that were noisy by day began to become totally deserted at an early hour of the evening every day, especially after two of the camp's youths were killed about three months ago. Things remained thus, until the people of the camp awoke one morning to read a leaflet calling for resistance to any collaborator with Israel, signed with the name "Forces of the Martyrs of 'Ayn al-Hulwah."

The Start of the Fire

The person talking to me added: "That every evening, Israeli forces accompanied by elements of the 'Sidon Grouping' came to the camp and arrested about 25 people suspected of supporting the organizations and bearing arms. Since that night, the camp by night turns into a shooting range. An announcement was made saying that the nationalists in the camp had the victory, and through psychological and moral pressure they had been able to force the collaborators to leave their homes inside the camp during the night, and return during the day. This victory of theirs was made difficult when two of their young men riding on a motorcycle dared to assassinate 'Abu Sultan', an official of the 'National Guard' in the camp at the beginning of last week, whereupon the atmosphere in the camp became tense, and members of the guard, accompanied by Israeli forces and the 'Sidon Grouping' engaged in provocative acts within the camp, which was surrounded and a number of its young men were arrested. The success of the nationalist elements in assassinating 'Abu Sultan' encouraged them to launch an attack on the 'National Guard' center itself, located in a populated area next to the camp. This induced a number of the 'Guard' to ask the 'Army of Southern Lebanon' for help, whereupon roads leading to the area were cut, and they combed the area extensively. But now the situation is as you have heard and see."

The Day of Passage

I make my way towards the interior of the camp. Semi-normal activity. The remains of a torn cardboard placard, on which was written "May 15, we will not forget you, and you will be the day of passage into our homeland." In the main square of the camp, a number of women were discussing what had happened to the march protesting the Israeli operation against the camp. A school teacher whom I greeted said, "We are UNEWA employees; we are not allowed to make any political statements or comments without prior approval." He asked a friend of his to tell us what had happened to the camp the night of 15 May. He said: "Tens of Israeli tanks, troop carriers and trucks loaded with soldiers surrounded the camp from all directions and blocked its entrances at about 11 pm on Tuesday. Starting at 1 am early Wednesday, three Israeli detachments supported by tanks and police dogs began to invade the camp from all directions, accompanied by a number of the collaborators. Within moments, the Israelis began to blow up houses over their occupants and drag young men from their beds and take them to three buses parked outside the camp. We awoke to the rumble of 'Merkava' tanks and troops carriers of the type 'MX-113'. In front of each Israeli unit went a collaborator, who would point to some house, and the Israelis would proceed to blow it

up, either with tank artillery or by placing an explosive device at its door, and they did not knock on a door even once."

The teacher broke in, after asking that his name not be mentioned, to add to his friend's words, saying: "After the door of the house was blown in, heedless of what might happen to the sleeping inhabitants, the occupation soldiers would storm it, firing inside it and dragging its inhabitants in their night clothes to the buses. The walls and ceilings of the huts were brought down over the heads of their inhabitants. If someone tried to open the door of his house to see what was going on, he would be surprised by occupation soldiers shouting: 'Stay in your homes.' During this time they had filled about 20 homes with dynamite." Included among the inhabitants of these homes were Hashim Diyab, Muhammad Maw'id, 'Atif Abu Shaqra, Abu Wahid Sariyah, Muhammad Ward, Ahmad 'Awd, Abu Musa Sariyah, 'Ali Hulayhil, and others. This sudden nightmare did not end until 4 am.

With the Director of the Agency

I leave the hospital, where I encounter John (Defretis), director of the Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian refugees [UNRWA] in Lebanon. I had the following conversation with (Defrets):

[Question] What do you do to limit what the people of the Palestinian camps suffer from under the shadow of occupation?

[Answer] The Agency has two tasks: the first is to provide educational and medical services and relief service to those registered in the regions, and the second is to protect the Palestinian refugees in the regions occupied by Israeli forces in accordance with the resolution adopted in 1982 by the General Assembly of the United Nations. Our duty is to send reports to the Secretary General on the security situation and the circumstances that the refugees live under in the occupied regions.

[Question] The belief prevails among the camp's residents that there might be larger Israeli operations, which Israel might be behind indirectly. They also do not dismiss the possibility that the camp might fall victim to a massacre, especially since reports about an approaching Israeli withdrawal increase such a possibility. Have you taken limited steps to prevent such a massacre?

[Answer] The duty of the Agency is only to report incidents that occur in the region. The Agency is not qualified to give protection in the regions which it occupies. In the regions that the Israeli forces withdraw from, the responsibility of protecting the refugees fall on the shoulders of the Lebanese government.

[Inset]

'Ayn al-Hulwah Camp

The 'Ayn al-Hulwah camp holds about 35,000 people, including 1400 of those that had previously been detained at the Ansar camp.

It is the largest Palestinian camp in Lebanon.

It is in the suburbs of the city of Sidon.

During the past few weeks, clashes have taken place in the camp between members of the "National Guard" which is armed by Israel, and members of the national resistance, and a number of the members of the "National Guard" fell dead or wounded.

12547

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SITUATION AMONG FIGHTERS, ATTEMPTS TO REARM DISCUSSED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 227, 16-22 Jun 84 pp 30-32

[Article by Salih Qallab]

[Text] During his last visit to the People's Republic of China, the Palestinian leader Yasir 'Arafat centered his discussions with officials in Beijing on the question of rearming the Palestinian forces and replacing the weapons which the Palestinian fighters lost in the wars of Beirut and Tripoli. The discussions also took up the question of training some of the Palestinian officers to take on the responsibility of training the forces of the Liberation Organization to use the new weapons that the Liberation Organization was to be supplied with.

According to information which "AL-MAJALLAH" has obtained from responsible Palestinian sources, the Chinese officials with whom 'Arafat held discussions have expressed their country's readiness to supply the Liberation Organization with all the weapons that it asks for and needs "because it has been tangibly proven to us during the events of the past 2 years that the Liberation Organization is a reality present on the scene of the struggle in the Middle East, and that the Palestinian number cannot be disregarded or ignored in any attempt to solve the crisis of that region." In reality, this matter again brings up the question that has been around for a long time, which is: What is going to happen to the forces of the Liberation Organization that left Beirut and Tripoli? And what is the condition of these forces which had become accustomed to daily clashes with the enemy ever since the revolution was launched until they left for their new positions, which some like to call their new exile, after the departure from Beirut and from Tripoli?

Friends of the Sea

During his departure from Beirut aboard the Greek ship, a singular conversation took place between 'Arafat and his companions after all traces of Beirut had disappeared beneath the horizon, about dispersal and the sea in Palestinian history. Among the things that Abu 'Ammar said as grief welled up in his voice was: "This sea is a friend to the Palestinian people. It has helped them through the ages." The Palestinian leader went on to tell the story of the Palestinian 'Issa al-'Awam who used to swim several miles

to reach 'Akka which was besieged by Crusader forces to bring it news and to provide its defenders with information from the leaders outside the siege.

It seems that Abu 'Ammar's prophecy pointing out that the Palestinian journey across the sea would not be the last was fulfilled sooner than expected, for in less than a year the scene was repeated, though with new actors on a new stage. The Palestinian fighters who had been transported to their new exile by Greek ships began to return to Tripoli across the very sea they had become familiar with during their first journey of captivity. But their stay in Tripoli did not last long, so they rode the waves again to their new locations . . . to their "new exile"!

So what is the actual situation of the fighters in their new positions? And what are they doing as they await another return to the borders of their country where they will be able to play their part against those who seized their country?

"AL-MAJALLAH" took on this question and traveled between Algiers, Tunis, Aden and Sanaa, and came up with the following answers:

After the departure from Beirut, the prevailing belief was that the dispersal would not last long, and that it would not be long before the situation changed and the new camps scattered between Mesopotamia and the Aures Mountains in Algeria became memories. However, after the departure from Tripoli, this picture began to change, and the feeling prevailed that the return trip would not be soon in coming. Therefore they began to think about setting up permanent installations in the camps, and they also began to think about setting up training programs to retrain the fighters attached to these camps, and turning these camps into fighting schools to train the sons of the Palestinian people scattered abroad.

Difficulties and Problems

First of all, the Palestinian leadership had to confront the psychological state that prevailed after the departure from Tripoli: tension, unrest, and feelings of loss. The first step was to answer the question that the fighters asked: What next? And where to?

To contain terrorist tendencies and feelings that blind revenge was necessary, intensive political programs were set up. The Palestinian chief of staff, General Abu al-Mu'tasim said: "After the Tripoli war, a large number of fighters began to think about leaving the present framework of the revolution and forming groups that operated their own way using the methods of the beginning stage of the revolution. We have made exhausting efforts to control this situation and to convert the hatred that prevailed after Tripoli into determination to raise the standard of fighting through training on new kinds of weapons, including airplanes, tanks and military units."

This Palestinian official acknowledges, as do other Palestinian officials that the problems and difficulties of the first stage were extremely hard. There is the tragedy of Palestinian families being separated from one another,

and there is the problem of a fighter who had left Tripoli or Beirut not having the address of his children or family and being cut off from news about them. Then there are problems associated with taking in the families which arrived with the fighters at their new positions: housing problems, providing schools for the children, and not turning the Palestinians into "ghettos" in their new gathering places. In addition to that, there are social problems resulting from the loss of some of the families of their breadwinners, and the loss of some of the fighters of their wives.

'Abbas Zaki, director of the Liberation Office in Aden, informed "Al-Majallah" that the United States had sent eight naval units towards the Yemeni coasts immediately after the fighters arrived from Beirut. Unusual Israeli naval activity in the Red Sea was also observed during the same period. He indicated that some Arab nations and some friendly nations had provided the Liberation Organization with reports about the possibility that Israel might carry out special operations against the new Palestinian positions.

Abbas Zaki revealed that certain countries had tried to infiltrate the camps to create internal problems and difficulties, and he mentioned that security installations had been able to uncover some hostile cells in the process of formation. He indicated that these cells had been preparing for certain operations aimed at souring relations between the Palestine Liberation Organization and the countries playing host to the Palestinian forces.

Here it is worth noting that two of the suspects hijacked a South Yemen passenger airplane about eight months ago. They tried to land it in one of the African countries, but the operation failed during its performance and the two hijackers surrendered themselves to Yemeni authorities.

Other information indicated that American war planes had flown over Palestinian positions more than once, those in the Yemen Arab Republic in particular. The same information mentioned that Yemeni authorities had more than once protested these violations, and warned that Yemen would not hesitate to use force if such flights continued.

Certain Palestinian sources indicated that the United States had put pressure on some of the countries hosting Palestinian fighters to close the camps belonging to the Liberation Organization, or to prevent these camps from holding training operations or making preparations. But these countries refused to give in to these pressures, and there is nothing to indicate that they are alarmed by what the Palestinians are doing in their new camps.

An Air Force and a Military College

A few days before he left for Tripoli, 'Arafat said in answer to a question directed to him by "AL-MAJALLAH" about the circumstances of the Palestinian fighters in their new positions: "We are currently taking far-reaching steps to turn these camps into factories turning out Palestinian fighters, and within a short period of time, we will have striking bases that will rival the bases of the most modern armies in the world."

At that time, he repeated that the resistance was trying to get a number of military transport planes to form an air bridge between its forces scattered among Algeria, Tunis, the Sudan, the two Yemens, and Iraq. It would seem that some of these ambitions were realized when some military transport planes now in service between the Palestinian bases and camps were acquired.

It is also no longer a secret that the Liberation Organization (the "Fatah" movement specifically), before the Israeli invasion of Lebanese territory, had been working on setting up a Palestinian air force. Accordingly, some fighters were sent to certain Arab and Eastern European countries to become military pilots. A large number of these have graduated and they joined air bases in some Arab countries until they were recently assembled in one of the Arab countries and equipped with fighter planes, "whose number permits us to say that the Palestinians now have aerial weapons," as one of the Palestinian officials put it.

In this connection, the deputy to the supreme commander of the Palestinian forces, Khalil al-Wazir (Abu Jihad) mentioned that some of the Palestinian propeller planes had been in Beirut when the Israeli army completed its blockade of the Lebanese capital, and that the planes had been safely removed about two months after the Palestinian resistance had left Beirut, and that the Israelis had not been able to find them even though they knew about their existence in Beirut.

Concerning qualifying and training, a Palestinian official mentioned that the resistance had reestablished the Palestinian military college, and that this college had begun to pursue its task of turning out Palestinian officers on a par with modern armies. The previous center of this college had been in the Palestinian camp of Shatila in one of the suburbs of the Lebanese capital of Beirut.

Palestinian officials refuse to specify the number of Palestinian fighters in the new camps. However, it is known that about 12,000 Palestinian fighters left Beirut in August of 1982, while about 4,000 fighters left Tripoli in the north of Lebanon with 'Arafat. It is also known that these camps have begun to receive new volunteers through the training of Palestinian youths in military operations.

According to what Palestinian leaders and officers say, training operations, in addition to acquiring new weapons including military planes and armor, center on qualifying a large number of Palestinian fighters for special operations. He indicated that the Palestinians' special operations would not stop at the previous limits, meaning infiltration across Arab borders and striking small Israeli targets.

Coordination with Host Forces

Abu al-Mu'tasim, the Palestinian chief of staff, says: "We in the Palestinian revolution believe in the unity of the Arab nation and the unity of its armies. We are therefore trying now to coordinate our forces with any other Arab forces." Among the things referred to by this Palestinian official was

that the Palestinian bases were cooperating with the training branches of the general staffs of the countries in which they found themselves, and that a large number of Palestinian officers had enrolled in courses for battalion leaders in some of these countries.

Abu al-'Mu'tasim confirmed that the training programs in the camps cover all fields of specialization: artillery, armored cruisers, air defense, technical affairs, administrative affairs, and that the Palestinian fighters are enrolling in training courses offered by the host armies, including courses for company leaders, parachute units, signal corps, and music section.

It seems that Palestinian officials understand the implication of their revolution lasting 20 years, so on that basis the "Samid" foundation was established to oversee the setting up of economic establishments and industrial and agricultural projects. Many fighters of advanced years are now being transferred to these establishments, where they will work when they are no longer able to pursue military activities.

Concerning the answer to the question: When will these fighters return to the front lines, and from where will they be launched? senior Palestinian officials cautiously hint that operations of sending fighters toward Arab and Palestinian territories never ceased for a moment even at the height of the war in Tripoli and North Lebanon. Some of these officials pointed out that the Palestinian resistance had not for a moment ceased to coordinate operations against the Israeli occupation forces in South Lebanon with the Lebanese Nationalist Movement.

In addition to this and the other, the prevailing view in Palestinian circles is that the Middle East region will soon experience significant and grave developments, and that after the Israeli and American elections, the coming year will see a great escalation that could lead to an Arab-Israeli confrontation going beyond the limits of a limited war of attrition.

These officials express their optimism about the possibility of patching up Palestinian-Syrian relations, and that the absence of the Palestinian fighters from the borders of their nation will not last long. They also indicated that the Palestinian leadership had adopted a resolution calling for escalation and intensification of military activity, whether within the occupied territory or across the borders of neighboring Arab countries.

The former Israeli defense minister, Ariel Sharon, had announced that one of the aims of the Israeli invasion of Lebanese territory was to destroy the support structure of the Palestine Liberation Organization and to crush its military and political capabilities. Now, 2 years after the invasion on the third anniversary of the new June war, the question that presents itself is: To what extent was Sharon able to realize his desire and strike the support structure of the Liberation Organization and destroy its military capability?

The preceding picture is the true answer to this inquiry. In addition to that, with every sunrise the occupied Arab territory in Palestine and Lebanon witnesses new acts of heroism, while at the same time 'Arafat remains as leader of the Palestinian people, the most important and vital man in what pertains to the Palestinian question.

12547

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ARTICLE DEPICTS SOVIETS' PERSISTING DILEMMA

Paris LE FIGARO-MAGAZINE in French 30 Jun 84 pp 106-115

[Article by Robert Lacontre: "They Destroy a Valley to Kill a Single Man; Monster Soviet Offensive Against the Afghan Resistance; Our Reporters Met Ahmad Mas'ud, the Most Prestigious Resistance Leader, Just Before the Battle"]

[Text] Frail, of medium height, with a nose like an eagle, his jet black hair covered by a woolen turban, Ahmad Shah Mas'ud (Mas'ud is his nom de guerre) is one of the most prestigious leaders of the Afghan resistance. He is a Tajik about 30 years old, the son of a senior officer under the old regime who attended the Faculty of Sciences after graduating from the French Lycee of Kabul. He is a fierce and remorseless war leader. He hates the kafir, the atheist, with an undying hatred. It is he, with his 4-5,000 fighters, the Mujahidin, who are bearing the brunt of the present offensive in the Panjshir Valley. "Amir," they call him, lowering their hands in respect. Our reporters and photographers surprised him at the beginning of the battle.

However, for the past month no one knows what has become of him. The Russians state that they captured him. Other reports let it be known that he is reportedly dead. Could he have been simply wounded? Could he be hidden out in a safe place to avoid the steamroller of the thousand tanks and armored cars which the Russians have sent in for the seventh time in this parcel of once-fertile land, 150 kilometers long and 20 kilometers wide, surrounded by impenetrable mountain peaks 3,000 to 4,000 meters high? Because today the Red Army is covering itself with glory, exterminating systematically everything that moves in front of it—these intrepid, barefoot guerrilla fighters, these 100,000 neolithic farmers who flee on every side to avoid genocide. Hundreds of armored helicopters machinegun the civilian population and the herds of animals, as if they were at a fair. They sprinkle them with asphyxiating gas. The marshals of the Soviet Army, taking advantage of the fact that there is a power vacuum in the Kremlin—as Chairman Chernenko is very ill—have decided to finish off the resistance, once and for all. They follow the scorched earth technique. Dozens of super-bombers, the TU-16's, the famous "Badgers," equivalent to the American B-52 "Stratofortresses," are expanding their unending round, taking off from Ashkhabad, capital of the Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republic, bombing blind from high altitude everything which shows any sign of life in this yellowish land, once strewn with lapis lazuli stones.

The 40,000 Russian soldiers (out of the 200,000 who occupy Afghanistan) then advance through a dead valley, while the paratroopers of the Second and Third Brigade parachute out over the craters which border Nuristan, not far from the Pakistani border, to catch the fugitives in a vice. It is the final solution.

Cave-Dwelling Soldiers

This is a valley which is dead during the day but which is still shaken by the final convulsions at night. Because once these fantastic views change from rose to black, shadows straighten up and climb out of their trenches. In turn these cave-dwelling soldiers launch their suicidal counterattacks. From underneath villages that have been completely flattened, phantom warriors armed with Kalashnikov rifles seized from the enemy and Molotov cocktails throw themselves at the invaders. More than 300 tanks, 200 trucks, and some 50 helicopters on the ground have been destroyed. Mas'ud, the "Lion of the Valley," has already killed more than 500 Soviets and 200 Afghan communist soldiers. The latter desert en masse. He has lost nearly the same number of Mujahidin. About 1,000 civilians--women, children, and old people--have been massacred. No prisoners are taken on either side.* Abdul Hay, one of Mas'ud's lieutenants, hides in granite caves with about 100 of Mas'ud's followers of all ages, from 15 to 70. Another of his supporters, "Commander Azim," 50 kilometers to the South, hides in a ditch 10 meters deep with about 30 former members of the Parcham faction [of the People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan], each of whom has already killed three Russians by the sword. An odor of gunpowder and blood stings your nose because there are many wounded.

The soldiers of the night, hidden like rats, now turn into surgeons. They cut into the living flesh of their comrades to save them from death. Some of the wounded were burned the previous week. Others make artificial limbs with pieces of wood, with their rifles always within reach. Five times a day, in their dark trenches, where one can barely distinguish the light of an oil lamp, "God's guerrillas" bend over in a direction which they believe points to Mecca, after having brushed their feet, chests, and faces with the dirt of their caves to clean themselves, after a fashion. They cry: "Allah Akbar! Allah Akbar! In the name of Allah, the clement and merciful!" Yussef Ali, 15 years old, trembles from the cold and distress. Tears reddened with blood stream down his thin cheeks. For the past 3 days his teeth have not stopped chattering. He killed his first "Russki," hardly older than he is--just 20--but quite blond and with rosy skin. At least four French doctors are in this area. We will have to wait for their return to find out more about the situation.

* In 1982 The Afghan resistance turned over 10 Russian prisoners to the International Red Cross, which handed them over to Switzerland. There are only nine of them left in the Zugerberg penitentiary, because Yuri Vachtchenko, one of them, succeeded in escaping and fled to the Federal Republic of Germany. The Swiss Government is quite embarrassed. If it releases the soldiers to the Soviet Government, they risk being sent to Siberia or being shot by a firing squad.

United in the Resistance

The large cities of Dashi-e-Asukhan and Dashi-e-Bolakhan have been entirely burned out. The Russians have installed bases at Bozoka, Anawa, and Rokha, as well as a bridgehead at Khenj. They are trying to control the Kohistan and Andarab passes. Hand to hand combat has taken place at Ghazni and Charikar. Now eight of the principal provinces, Qunduz, Takhar, Badakhstan, Parwan, Baghlan, Kapisa, Kunar, and Lagman, are fully in revolt and are providing support for Mas'ud's fighters.

On the ground the Afghan resistance includes as many groups as there are tribes, divided in turn into clans, sub-clans, and families. There are more than 40 small armies which are fighting in isolation but which, through the use of the "bush telegraph," are well informed about what is going on throughout the country. Yuriy Andropov, the late Soviet leader, finally obtained a short truce from Mas'ud in January 1983. The Russians took advantage of it to infiltrate resistance movements and to have several regional leaders assassinated by agents of the KGB and by the Khad, the KGB's affiliate in Afghanistan.

Mas'ud used this respite to regroup his troops and obtain food and ammunition. Then the "Amir" again took up the fight by surprise, inflicting serious losses on the less attentive Soviet occupation forces. Bombs exploded more or less everywhere in the large cities, even at the Soviet Embassy in Kabul. Murderous ambushes took place in Mazar-i-Sharif, in the Shi'ite area, near the border with the Soviet Union and along the North-South road to Kabul. In the Salang tunnel more than 500 Russians were killed. In Peshawar, Pakistan, about 20 of the resistance organizations, including the "Jam'iat-e Eslami (Mas'ud organization), the "Hezb-e Eslami," the "Harakat" political party, and "Setem-i-Melli," the Shi'ite group, finally took action to form a common front.

Progressives, authentic nationalists, royalists, and republicans together set up a supply network to provide food, weapons, ammunition, and medical supplies to the most experienced of the fighting groups. The Wardak tribe, with 45,000 fighters (whose chief, who bears the same name, we interviewed here in Paris) East of Kabul and South of the great statues of Buddha at Bamyán, joined up with the large Paktia tribe to the West. The Shi'ite guerrillas in Nuristan, who look like Mongols, came down from their mountain peaks to help the Sunnite Tajiks, who speak Farsi like their racial brothers in Soviet Tajikistan.

A Dirty War

This horrible war has lasted 4 years and has been almost forgotten by the West. It has caused nearly 1 million dead among the Afghans, 15,000-20,000 among the Soviet occupying forces, and 5 million refugees, 4 million of whom are in Pakistan and nearly 1 million in Iran. That is a loss of 6 million people out of a total population of 17 million. As in Vietnam and Angola, the dead among the occupying forces are transported in secret in plastic bags to their country. Local Soviet newspapers (not available for subscription by foreigners) report village funerals without any further explanation. In the collective farms and factories people know what that means.

In the Soviet Union the propaganda is so intensive and exaggerated that the people no longer believe in it. The people think that these are useless deaths and that

this is a dirty war. The ordinary Russian soldier wonders what he is going to do in the course of an assignment to Afghanistan. Each death of an Afghan, each family exterminated, each "martyr" is so much yeast for the resistance which includes all of the tribes. These are the same tribes which, in time of peace, endlessly fought for a well, a cow, or for anything at all.

Now the guerrillas are better organized. They are well acquainted with all of the arms traffickers in the world. They also receive arms from other Islamic countries, from certain Western countries which supply them clandestinely, and even from the Chinese. It is the transportation of these supplies which is difficult. The supply caravans only move at night and constantly change their routes. During the day they must absolutely find a place to hide themselves, because the Soviet helicopters patrol unceasingly. They have to avoid the oases, water sources too well known by the enemy, which are often poisoned, and mini mines which are scattered through areas through which they must pass.

Here and there mounds of freshly-turned earth have been planted with flags of green, the color of Islam, and of white, the color of mourning, marking the new cemeteries and the martyrdom of the Afghan people. The road which leads to Ghost, southeast of Kabul, is also a large cemetery, but this one belongs to the Soviet Army, consisting of hulks of steel, burnt-out trucks, and destroyed military vehicles. The ragged guerrillas have removed the foundations of the road and have replaced the layer of asphalt. Soviet tanks have been literally ensnared on this road. Once night falls, the fighters in the shadows splash gasoline on the tanks. The Pastun (40 percent of the population) and Tajik (35 percent) groups, both of them Sunnites, and the Shi'ite Hazari (10 percent of the population) have taken up arms on a large scale against the invader from the North. They fight today with as much fire and anger against the Russian enemy as against the British in the 19th century.

Fighting Mullahs

The fact is that not everything is going well for the Soviet Army and that the Afghan Government under Babrak Karmal is incapable of imposing Marxism-Leninism on the Afghans, more particularly since tension is increasing between the two rival Afghan communist factions, the Parcham (the flag) and the Khalqi (the people). The Pathans (the Pashtuns of Pakistan) even provide volunteer fighters to their neighbors, who are also their cousins. The Mohmans, a tribe of 40,000 members residing on both sides of the frontier, benefit from the slight control exercised by the Pakistani Army and aid the Afghan resistance. The situation is less clear in terms of the Baluchi, who live in the area bordering Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan. There the communist structure is more fully established.

Soviet agents have taken advantage of intra-tribal quarrels to infiltrate themselves in force. They are supported by the sons of government officials, bourgeois and feudal elements, who have studied in the West. In the last analysis, in these three countries, the Baluchi are separatists. It is the Pakistani Government in Islamabad which is undoubtedly the most seriously threatened by a split which would make it possible for Moscow to set up a people's republic there, subject to its orders.

There are also Turkmen and Uzbek elements (as well as Tajiks, as we have seen), in addition to a few Kirghiz people, the same kind of people as those who, together with the Kazakhs, make up the five Muslim republics in Soviet Central Asia, which have a total population of 60-80 million people. This was stated to me recently by the King of Morocco. This is the largest colonial empire in the world. No one knows exactly what they think of all of this. They know perfectly well what is going on across the Amu Daria, known as the Oxus to our fathers.

There were 15,000 Muslim mosques in Afghanistan before the war. Half of the mosques have been burned down. There were 100,000 mullahs, and therefore 100,000 more combatants, who preach a holy war. The Marxist and atheist bulldozer will have a lot of trouble defeating them, unless they exterminate all of them. There are thousands of Mas'ud's who are growing out of adolescence and who are learning the art of war. The Hindu Kush, this fabulous block of mountains, echoes the Muslim call to prayers five times a day. Evening falls. The mountain peaks take on pastel colors in the style of Michaud.

It is in the early evening that the warriors of Allah come out of their hiding places and go to attack the enemy.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

1. p 106. Bombs and asphyxiating gas fall from the sky. In a few seconds this village, which is suspected of sheltering guerrilla fighters, will be wiped out by the bombardment conducted by this Soviet helicopter. Each day hundreds of aircraft of this type machinegun the civilian population or drop asphyxiating gas on Afghan rebels in Kabul.
 2. p 107. The enemy Number 1 of the Soviets. Mas'ud is 32 years old. He is determined and pitiless as a war leader, fighting against the Soviet occupation forces. His own hunting record includes 500 Soviet soldiers and 200 supporters of the Afghan Government.
 3. p 108. "The Lion of the Valley." With his 4,000 to 5,000 "Mujahidin," who have baptized him, "the Lion of the Valley." This former student of the French Lycee of Kabul is bearing the brunt of the Soviet offensive in the Panjshir Valley.
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5170

CSO: 4619/60

INTERVIEW WITH OVADIA SOFFER ON KHOMEYNI, ATOM BOMB, PLO

Paris LE FIGARO-MAGAZINE in French 30 Jun 84 pp 80-82

[Interview with Ovadia Soffer, Israeli ambassador to France, by Robert Lacontre; date and place not specified]

[Text] Ambassador Soffer is sure that "The Ayatollah Khomeyni has the means of constructing a nuclear bomb or of buying one from traffickers. Then he will begin a campaign of blackmail."

[Question] Ambassador, you know that Carlo Palermo, the Italian judge, has just published an explosive report revealing that a group of international traffickers has obtained for the Ayatollah Khomeyni quantities of uranium, of plutonium, and even nuclear devices (sic) [as published]. On the other hand, at Bouchir, on the Persian Gulf, not far from the terminal on Kharg Island, about 200 West German engineers are engaged in "reactivating" the two nuclear power plants built by the Federal Republic of Germany*. Is Khomeyni trying to obtain an atomic bomb?

[Answer] Personally, I have no evidence, but I am convinced that Khomeyni is trying to obtain the means of constructing his own atomic bomb, or is even trying to buy one, because the Islamic revolution is not limited to Iran or to the Middle East. It has global ambitions. The acquisition of such a weapon would make large-scale blackmail possible.**

* Iran also has two nuclear power centers at Ahwaz, built by the French. For the time being, they have been abandoned.

** Therefore, Khomeyni is interested in the Koran and in the atom. In January 1984 he sent a special mission to Europe, headed by a person called Ahmadi. Three Iranian atomic specialists: Khazaneh, from the center for applied nuclear studies in Isfahan; Khechavarzi, from the military nuclear services; and Rohanizadek, from the Mainburi Institute, had even worked for a time in France. Other specialists went to Canada and the United States. They have been very well received. They are trying, above all, to enroll "major figures." Moghomi, the present director of the Bouchir nuclear centers, has all the money he wants available to him.

You know that, at present, with money you can buy any kind of weapons in any quantity. I am very concerned about this subject. It is therefore essential to insist on particularly effective controls on nuclear power plants.

In fact, the dividing line between civilian and military production is not always well defined. We have already saved the West from catastrophe by destroying the Osirak nuclear reactor at Tamouz, Iraq, which had been built by the French, because Iraq was on the point of acquiring a military nuclear capability.

[Question] Therefore, a new attack of this kind can be envisaged?

[Answer] It is not for me to say. Certainly, we are in favor of the development of the Middle East by means of peaceful, "civilian" nuclear power stations. If a contrary decision is to be made, it is up to my government to make it.

[Question] In the Persian Gulf we are going from escalation to escalation. Now the Saudi Arabian Air Force is fighting against the Iranian Air Force. This is a kind of new war.

[Answer] I am astonished that the Western newspapers speak in particular about a ceasefire affecting the bombing of the cities of the two belligerents, when Iran and Iraq have already resumed their attacks on economic objectives, which means that the closure of the Persian Gulf is very possible.

[Question] In that case, there would be no petroleum for the West.

[Answer] You have to take into account three new factors: (1) The Persian Gulf has lost its importance because there are reserves of petroleum; (2) other countries producing petroleum can increase their production; and (3) I will give you an example: France has reduced its dependence on the Persian Gulf to a spectacular degree. French dependence has gone down from 76 percent to 17 percent, thanks to its policy of diversification of its purchases and the use of new forms of energy—its nuclear power centers, in particular. The dependence of the West on the Persian Gulf is now much less.

[Question] Isn't your proposal to reopen the pipeline from Iraq to Haifa through Jordan a political bluff? Moreover, Iraqi President Saddam Husayn immediately rejected the idea.

[Answer] Not at all. This is a concrete and tangible example of our wish to cooperate with all of our neighbors. I think that this proposal could save the Iraqi economy. Under this proposal Iraq could thereby export all of its production, while the Syrians have closed the oil pipeline which passed through their territory. That also refutes all the accusations that we are supporting Iran.

[Question] However, some sources state that you are arming the Iranians.

[Answer] I would like to take advantage of this occasion to refute very energetically these absolutely unfounded accusations. Khomeyni ceaselessly declares that the number one enemy of the Islamic Republic is Israel. Could he then contact us to obtain weapons? It is absolutely illogical.

[Question] How do you explain the fact that France and the USSR are the principal suppliers of arms to Iraq?

[Answer] The West is tilting toward Iraq because Iran is a reactionary regime which flouts human rights and which sends children to be massacred. However, Iraqi aggressiveness no longer needs to be demonstrated. It was Iraq which began this war. By supporting Iraq, the Western countries may throw Khomeyni into the arms of the USSR, which is also represented in Baghdad.

Let's take another example. Thanks to the West, Saudi Arabia has the most sophisticated weapons. If, tomorrow, the Soviets provoked a coup d'etat in Riyadh and King Sa'ud fell as the shah of Iran fell, who would benefit from the whole Saudi arsenal?

[Question] On the other hand, don't you think that King Husayn is now totally isolated in the Middle East?

[Answer] The king of Jordan was sacrificed by the other Arab countries in favor of the PLO when they decided at the Rabat summit meeting that he no longer represented the Palestinians, whereas his country is essentially Palestinian.

[Question] It is said that Hassan, his brother, might succeed him on the Hashemite throne.

[Answer] I don't think that the succession problem has already arisen. I only know that Hassan is more of a Bedouin than his brother. Therefore, he will be even more isolated. In any case, any change of regime in Jordan would be extremely dangerous for the whole region.

[Question] On the other hand, in Syria the battle for the succession to the president has already begun. President Assad no longer governs. He is very sick.

[Answer] In fact, Assad might die at any time.

[Question] In that case there would be a new deal of the cards in the Middle East.

[Answer] I know that Hafiz al-Assad has not tried to throw himself into a military adventure because we are 40 kilometers from Damascus and a war against Israel would be an unfortunate operation for him and for his regime. And, on the other hand, there is a risk of an expansion of the conflict.

\$1 Million Per Day for the PLO

[Question] It is said that Rif'at al-Assad, his brother; General Tlas; and many other possible successors may be much more pro-Soviet. What is your view?

[Answer] Rif'at says he is pro-Western. That didn't stop him recently from going to Moscow. The USSR, which for a long time has been pulling the strings in this region, is playing an extremely dangerous game. After receiving the Syrians, the Russians have just received an Iranian delegation. They are also trying to reconcile Iraq and Syria. From the Middle East to Ethiopia, including the Persian Gulf, Soviet Russia is trying to put its pawns in place.

[Question] And the Camp David agreement, is this finished?

[Answer] Absolutely not. It is always possible to reactivate negotiations with the Egyptians and the Palestinians of Judea and Samaria. In any case, Israel has always shown that it is pragmatic in outlook and has been and will always be ready to negotiate with all of its neighbors.

[Question] And Arafat, is he finished?

[Answer] He has been completely bypassed by events. He lost an historic opportunity at the time of the first evacuation from Beirut when he refused to join in the peace process. Today he claims credit for the most abominable acts of terrorism. I don't think that he can survive politically. He is even risking his own skin. His physical survival does not interest us. He is forced to join the most extremist elements. In this case he is only an instrument of Syrian terrorism.

[Question] However, the PLO still represents a financial power.

[Answer] In fact the Arab countries, and particularly the moderates like Saudi Arabia, provide him with \$1 million per day. It's a kind of racket. The present reserves of the PLO reportedly amount to \$15 billion.

[Question] All of that is completely cynical when we know that, in fact, no Arab country wants to see the establishment of an independent Palestinian state, despite the official statements and the warm embraces between Arab leaders.

[Answer] Exactly.

[Question] Do you think that Mitterrand will meet Arafat next month at the time of the Franco-Jordanian summit meeting in Amman?

[Answer] At present France is engaged in improving its relations with Israel. It is in a good position in the Middle East to play an important role, because France has close relations with the Arab countries. On the other hand, President Mitterrand has always denounced terrorism. Under these conditions, it seems difficult to me that he would meet Arafat.

[Question] You have served in Chad. You know that country well. Is the latest proposal by Colonel Qadhafi to withdraw his troops (he now admits that there are Libyan troops in Chad.) if the French do the same, a sincere one? Furthermore, do you think that the 3,000 French soldiers stuck in the desert there still have a role to play?

[Answer] France has an important mission to perform in French-speaking Africa because those countries of Africa depend on France for their security. Your country already saved one of the pillars of the free world in Africa, Zaire, at the time of the Koiwezi operation. Without France, Qadhafi would penetrate to the heart of Black Africa to establish his own kind of Islamic republic there.

[Question] Yes, but on the other hand the West has thousands of its fellow citizens in Tripoli, who are essentially hostages. Can you make war and engage in business at the same time?

[Answer] In fact, there is often a contradiction between political objectives and economic interests. At times, this is annoying. At times you can reconcile the two. In any case, it would be necessary to put an end to the policy of blackmail and terrorism carried on by Qadhdhafi.

[Question] To conclude, your country is involved in an elections campaign. Could you say that if Shimon Peres, the socialist, were to win over Yitzhak Shamir, the foreign policy of Israel might change?

[Answer] You know, there is a national consensus on the basic problems which affect Israel. This consensus is shared by all parties. All parties are against negotiations with the PLO, against the establishment of a Palestinian state led by the PLO, and all are in favor of negotiations with our neighbors.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

1. p 80. "The Koran" and the atom. Ayatollah Khomeyni, the fanatical old man—he is more than 80 years old—is presently having two nuclear centers "reactivated" by 200 West German engineers. Israel is carefully watching the atomic center at Bouchir [Iraq] on the Persian Gulf. A new "Operation Tamouz" can be expected like the one when the Israeli Air Force destroyed the Osirak nuclear reactor in Iraq, which had been constructed by the French.
2. p 82. Diplomacy and sculpture. Mrs Dorine Soffer does not want to be called "Madame Ambassador." First of all, she is a well-known sculptor. In our photograph, with her husband [Left] and Robert Lacontre, our reporter [Middle], she shows us a keepsake given her by Emperor Bokassa. Ambassador Soffer has served in Chad, in the Central African Republic, at the United Nations, and in Geneva. He and his wife were born in Iraq.

5170
CSO: 4619/61

KUWAITI PAPER INTERVIEWS IRANIAN OPPOSITION LEADER

GF241640 Kuwaiti AL-ANBA' in Arabic 23 Jul 84 p 19

[Interview with Iranian National Movement leader Taleb Khalash by AL-ANBA' correspondents 'Adnan al-Rashid and Bibi al-Marzuq in Baghdad--date not given]

[Excerpts] ['Adnan al-Rashid and Bibi al-Marzuq] As you represent an organized front of opposition to the regime ruling in Iran, how developed is your cooperation with the other opposition groups?

[Taleb Khalash] All opposition groups to Khomeyni's regime have one aim which is to overthrow this regime and to return peace to Iran. However, despite agreement on this aim, we differ in our points of view with some opposition groups such as the Mojahedin-e Khalq organization and the group of former Iranian President Abolhasan Bani-sadr, because they were responsible for bringing Khomeyni to power in Iran. Generally, we are in complete agreement with former Iranian Prime Minister Shahpur Bakhtiar in his opposition to Khomeyni's regime.

[Al-Rashid and Al-Marzuq] Do you have channels of contact and movement inside Iran?

[Khalash] Most of our movement and activities are carried out inside Iran and not outside it as some people believe, despite our headquarters being in the United States and Europe. We have a radio station, a television station, and a daily newspaper. Our publications and transmissions reach Iran. About a month ago, we interviewed Ayatollah Hasan Qomi who is considered to be one of the five foremost religious authorities in Iran.

[Al-Rashid and Al-Marzuq] What is the stand of the Iranian Army and its leaders on Khomeyni's regime?

[Khalash] We pin our big hopes on the Iranian Army correcting the situation in Iran. It can without a doubt carry out a military coup to return internal organization to the state. It needs 2 years to achieve that. If the army succeeds in overthrowing the present regime, it will as a matter of course be that it will have the support of the Iranian people who want to remove

this regime, because they have been subjected to much terror and tyranny at the hands of the bloodthirsty regime which is currently ruling Iran.

[Al-Rashid and Al-Marzuq] What about the islands of Tumb al-Kubra, Tumb al-Sughra, and Abu Musa which Iran is currently occupying?

[Khalash] There are old formal treaties between Iran and the emirates on the issue of these islands. It is know to all that these treaties were not signed under duress. Accordingly, these islands are part of Iran as stipulated in these treaties.

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